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SEGA

KNUCKLES

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46971

THE ECHIDNA



**PENDERS • SPAZIANTE • GALAN
GROSSMAN • WILLIAMS • PEPOY**

GNUCKLES™

BOOK TEN

The Forgotten Tribe

Part One of Three

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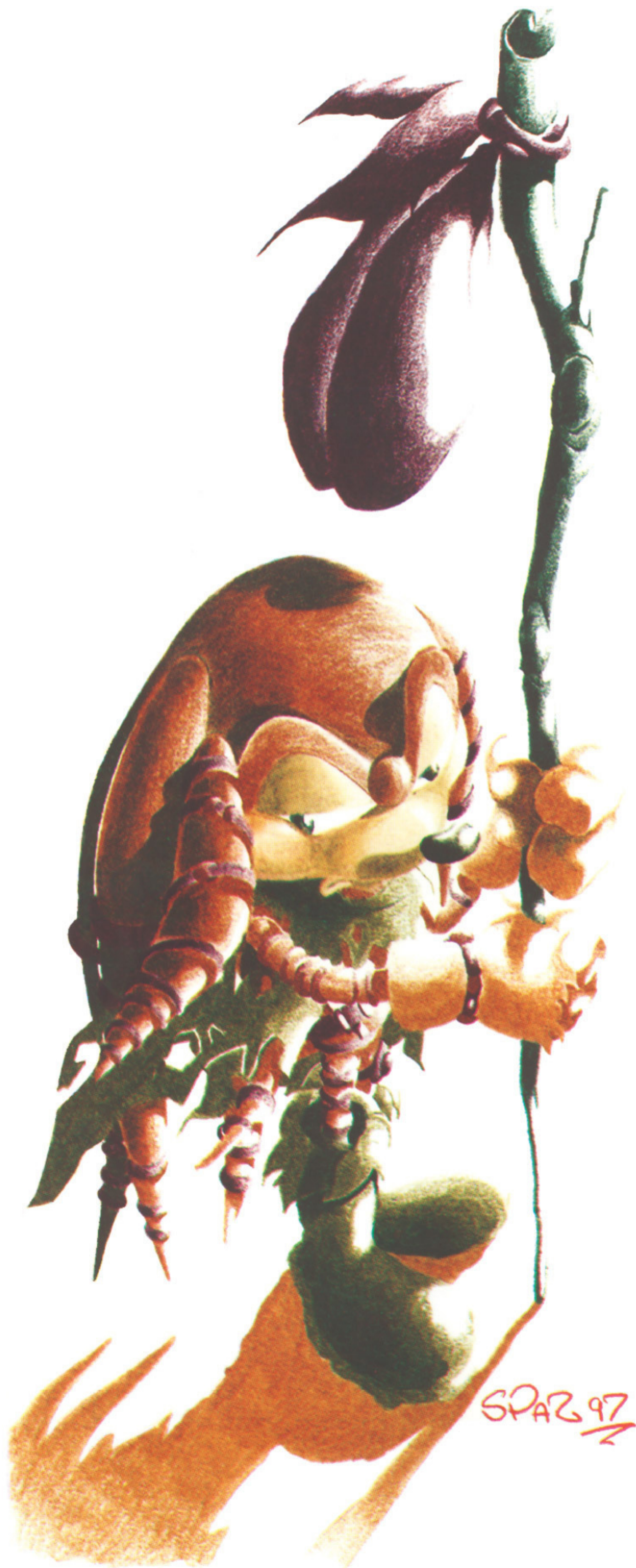
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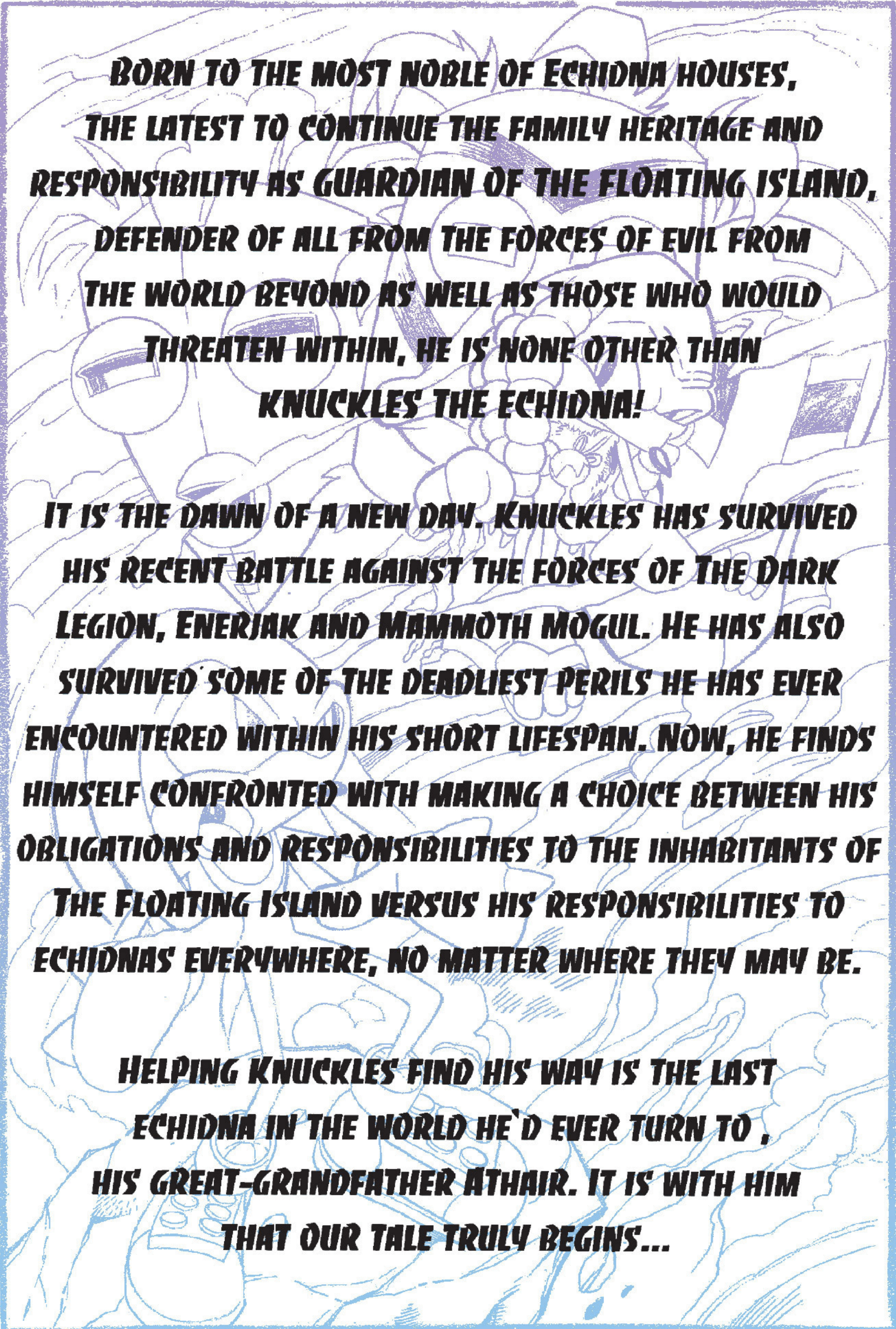
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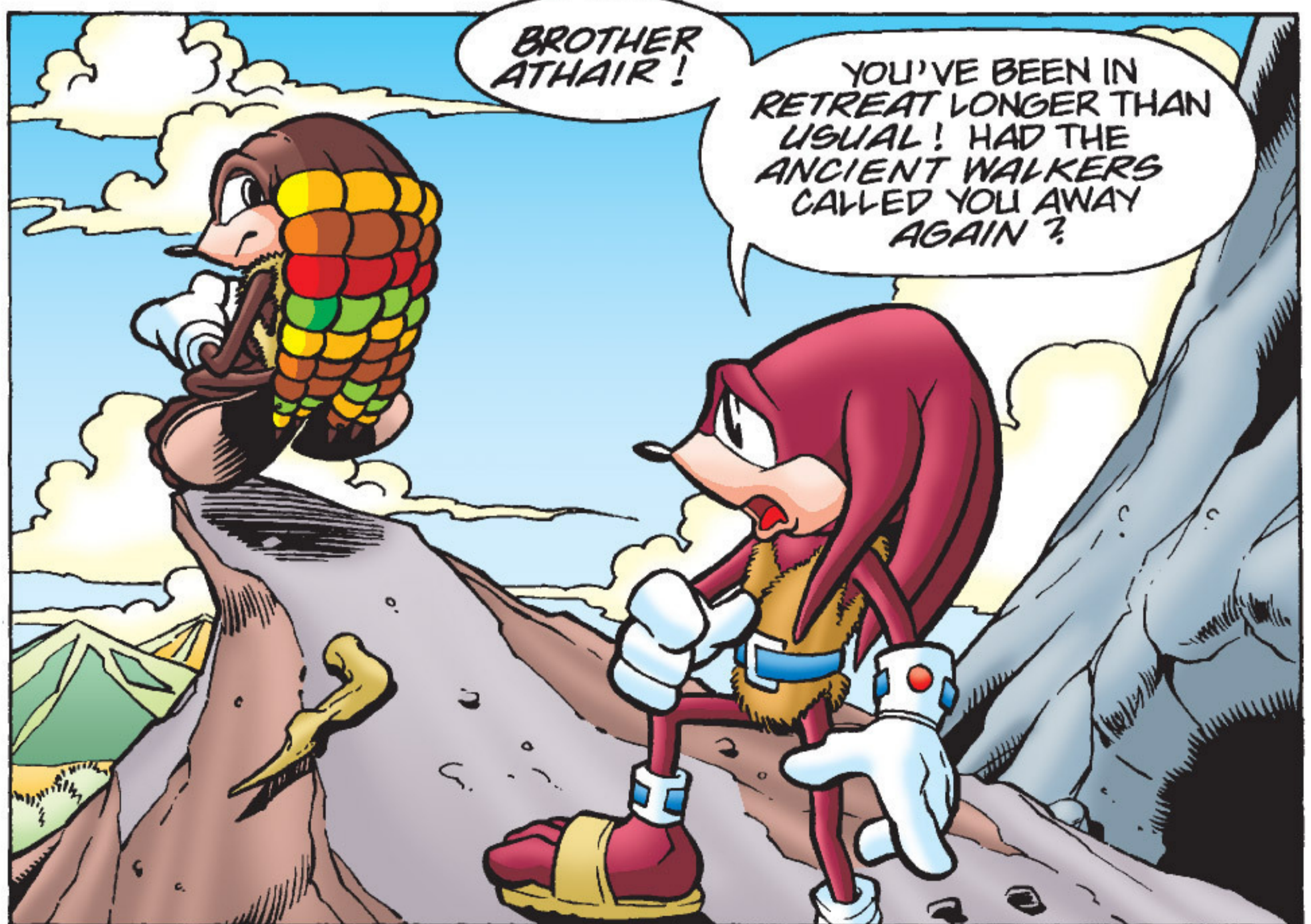
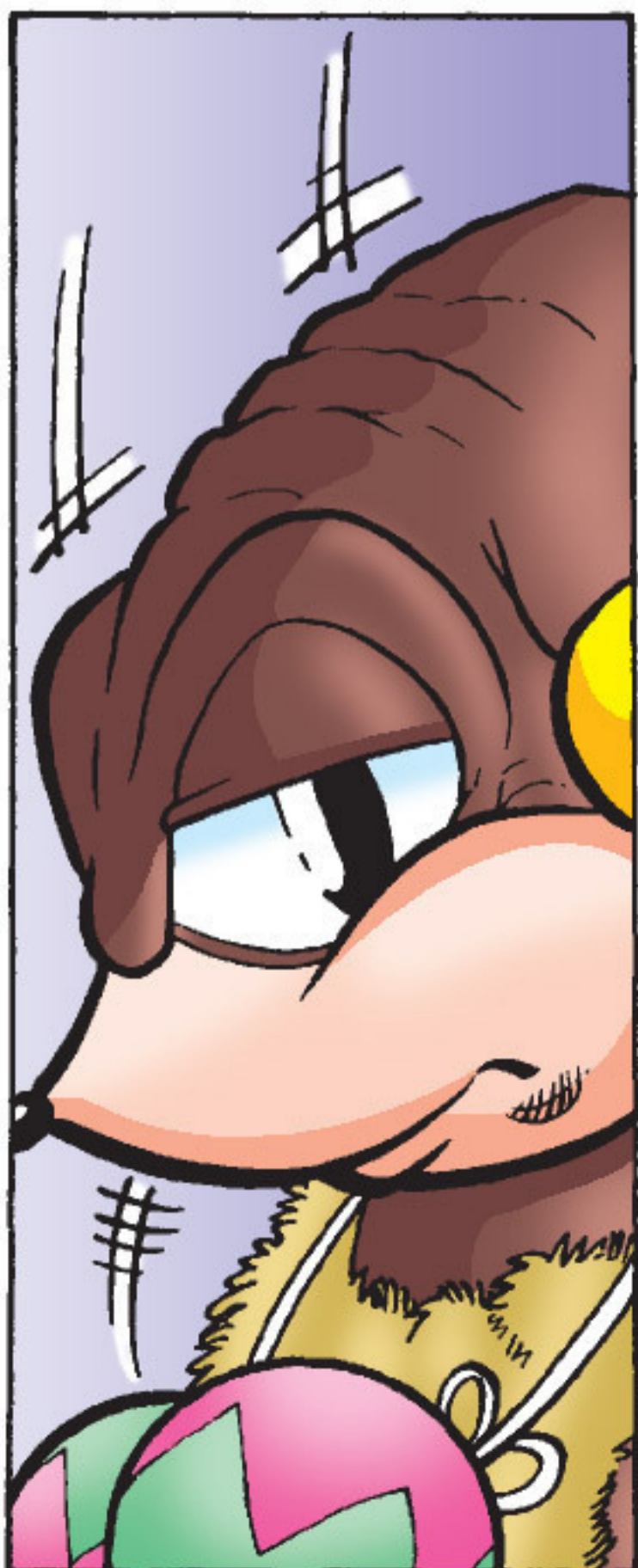
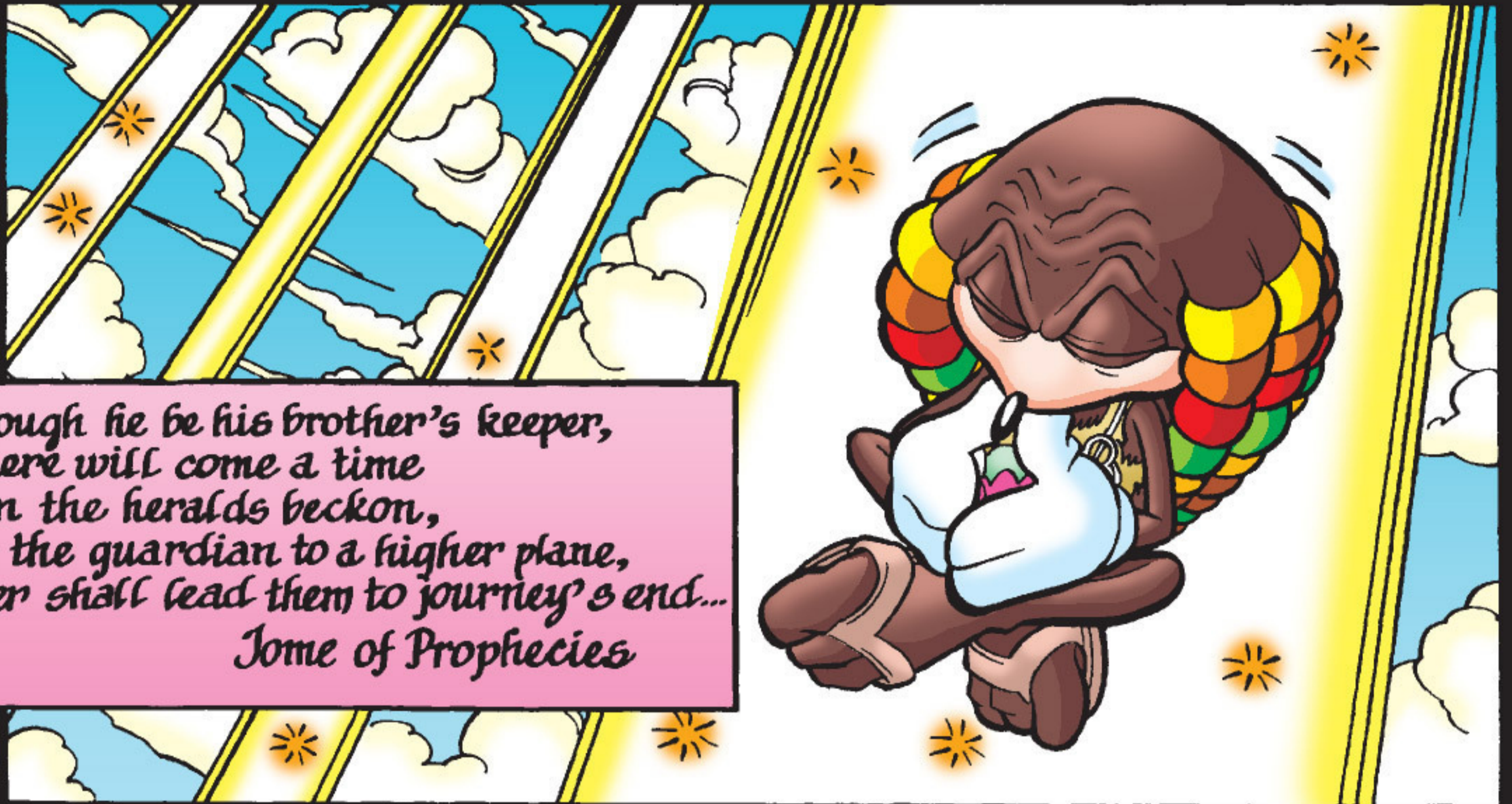


**BORN TO THE MOST NOBLE OF ECHIDNA HOUSES,
THE LATEST TO CONTINUE THE FAMILY HERITAGE AND
RESPONSIBILITY AS GUARDIAN OF THE FLOATING ISLAND,
DEFENDER OF ALL FROM THE FORCES OF EVIL FROM
THE WORLD BEYOND AS WELL AS THOSE WHO WOULD
THREATEN WITHIN, HE IS NONE OTHER THAN
KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA!**

**IT IS THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY. KNUCKLES HAS SURVIVED
HIS RECENT BATTLE AGAINST THE FORCES OF THE DARK
LEGION, ENERJAK AND MAMMOTH MÖGUL. HE HAS ALSO
SURVIVED SOME OF THE DEADLIEST PERILS HE HAS EVER
ENCOUNTERED WITHIN HIS SHORT LIFESPAN. NOW, HE FINDS
HIMSELF CONFRONTED WITH MAKING A CHOICE BETWEEN HIS
OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE INHABITANTS OF
THE FLOATING ISLAND VERSUS HIS RESPONSIBILITIES TO
ECHIDNAS EVERYWHERE, NO MATTER WHERE THEY MAY BE.**

**HELPING KNUCKLES FIND HIS WAY IS THE LAST
ECHIDNA IN THE WORLD HE'D EVER TURN TO,
HIS GREAT-GRANDFATHER ATHAIR. IT IS WITH HIM
THAT OUR TALE TRULY BEGINS...**

*Yea, though he be his brother's keeper,
there will come a time
when the heralds beckon,
raising the guardian to a higher plane,
and another shall lead them to journey's end...
Tome of Prophecies*



I WAS IN DEEP CONTEMPLATION CONCERNING RECENT EVENTS I HAD TO PLAY A PART IN--AND HOW THAT IS NOTHING COMPARED TO WHAT WILL HAPPEN SOON*.

* SEE KNUCKLES ARCHIVES VOL. 2 AND SONIC ARCHIVES VOL. 16 --ARCHIVE-ITOR

IT WILL NOT BE LONG BEFORE THE DAY OF FURY IS WITH US!

WE HAD BEST HAVE THE TRIBE PACK UP AND MOVE ON!

ARE WE ANYWHERE NEAR REFUGE, BROTHER ATHAIR?

MOTHER, WHY ARE YOU CRYING?

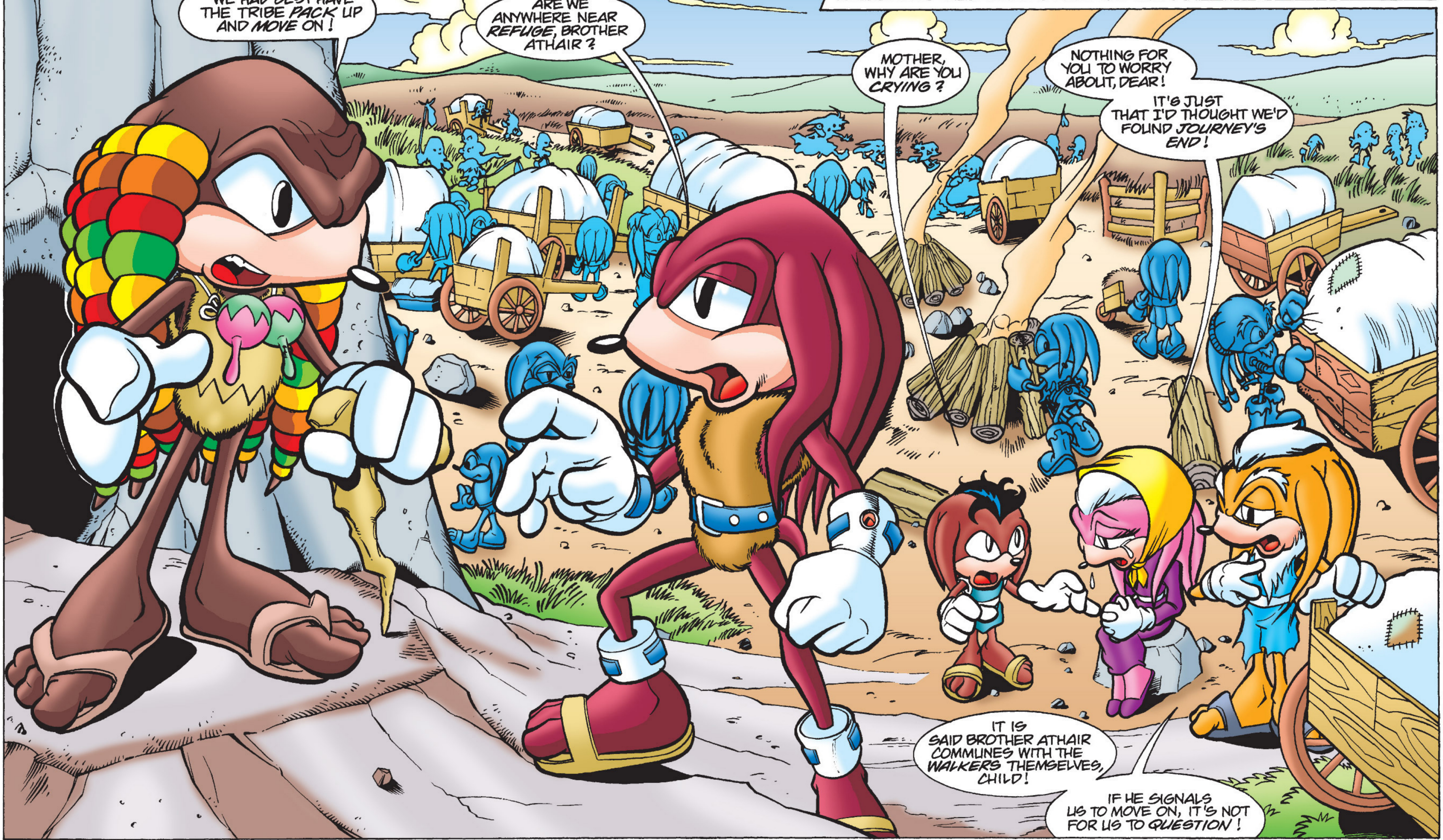
NOTHING FOR YOU TO WORRY ABOUT, DEAR!

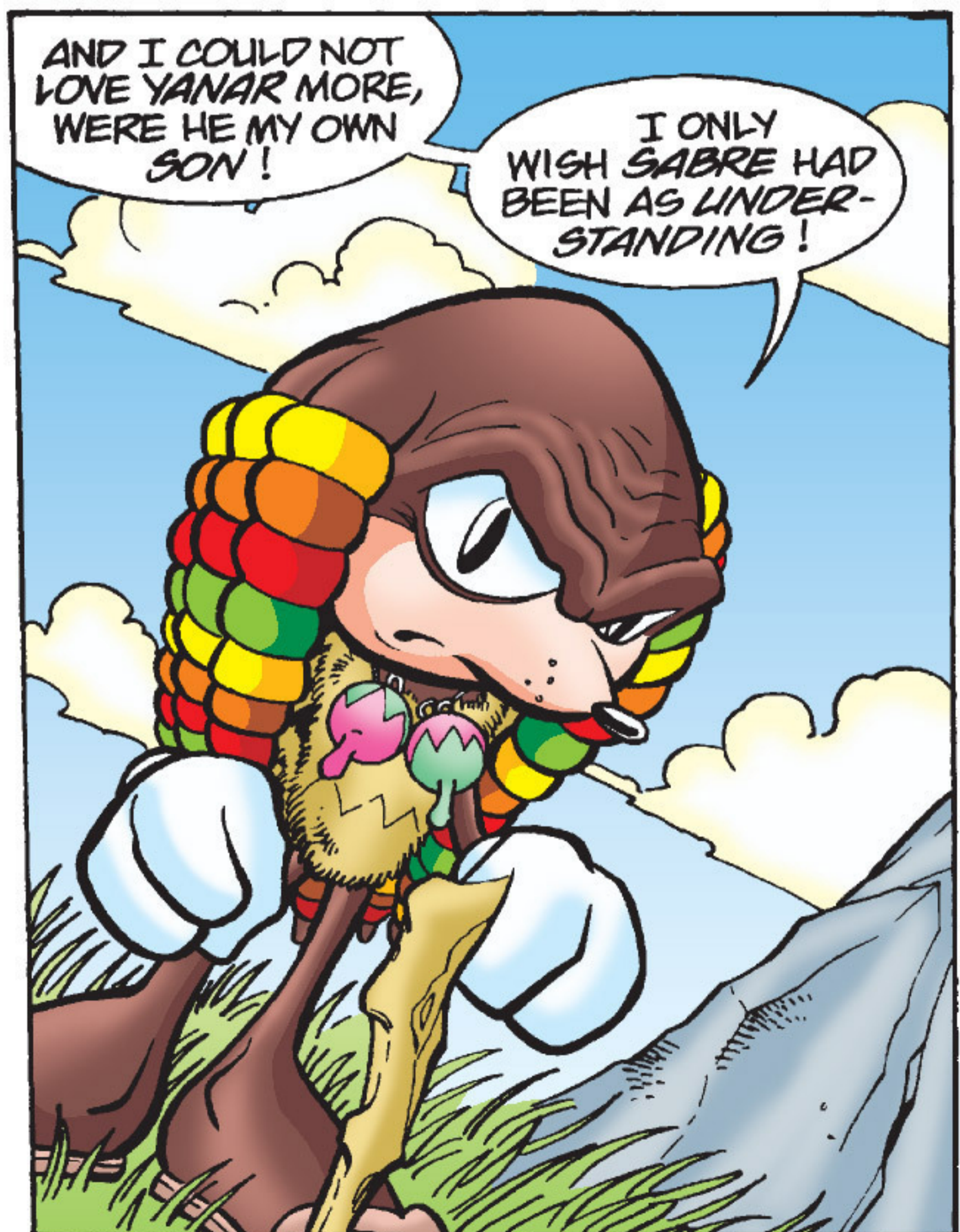
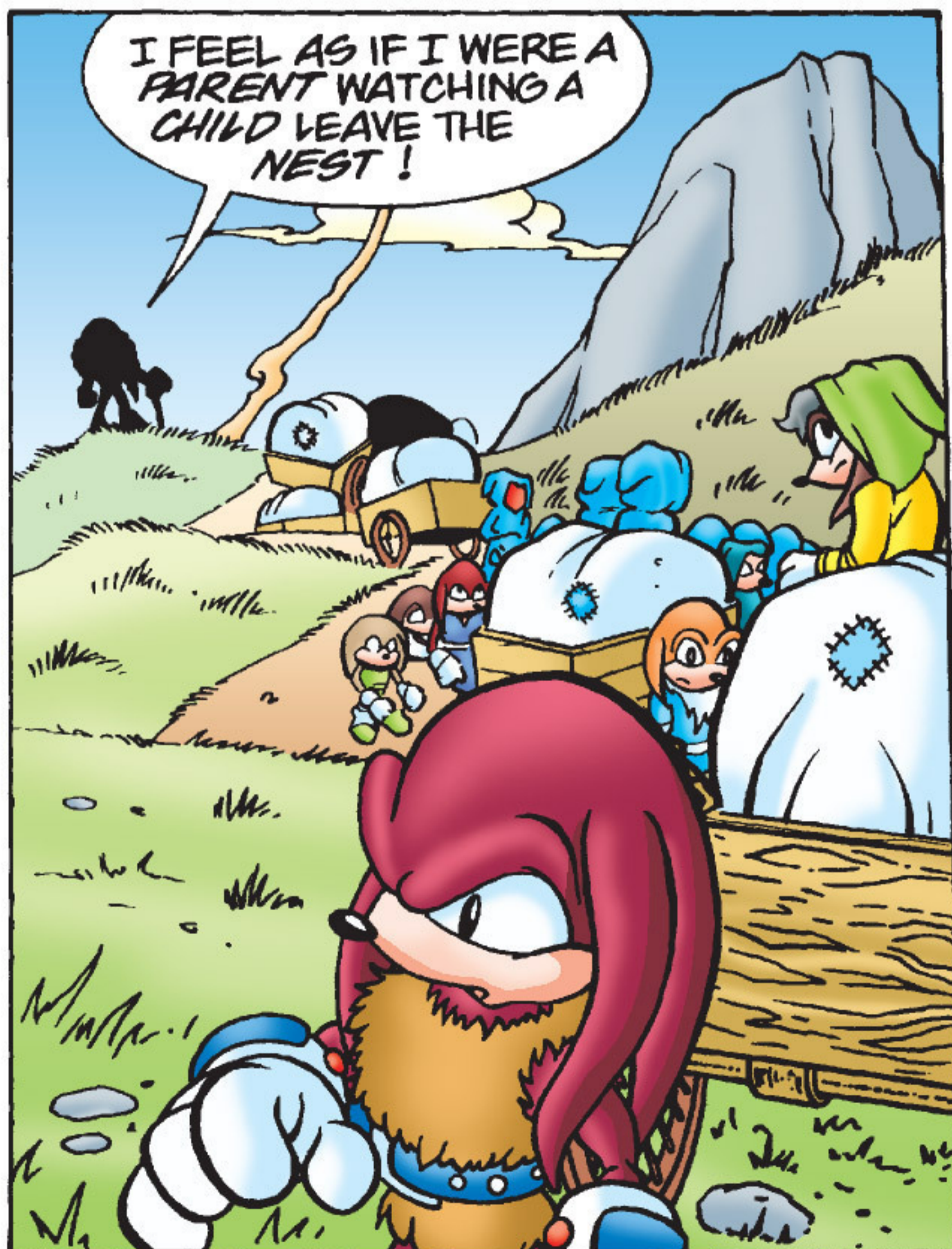
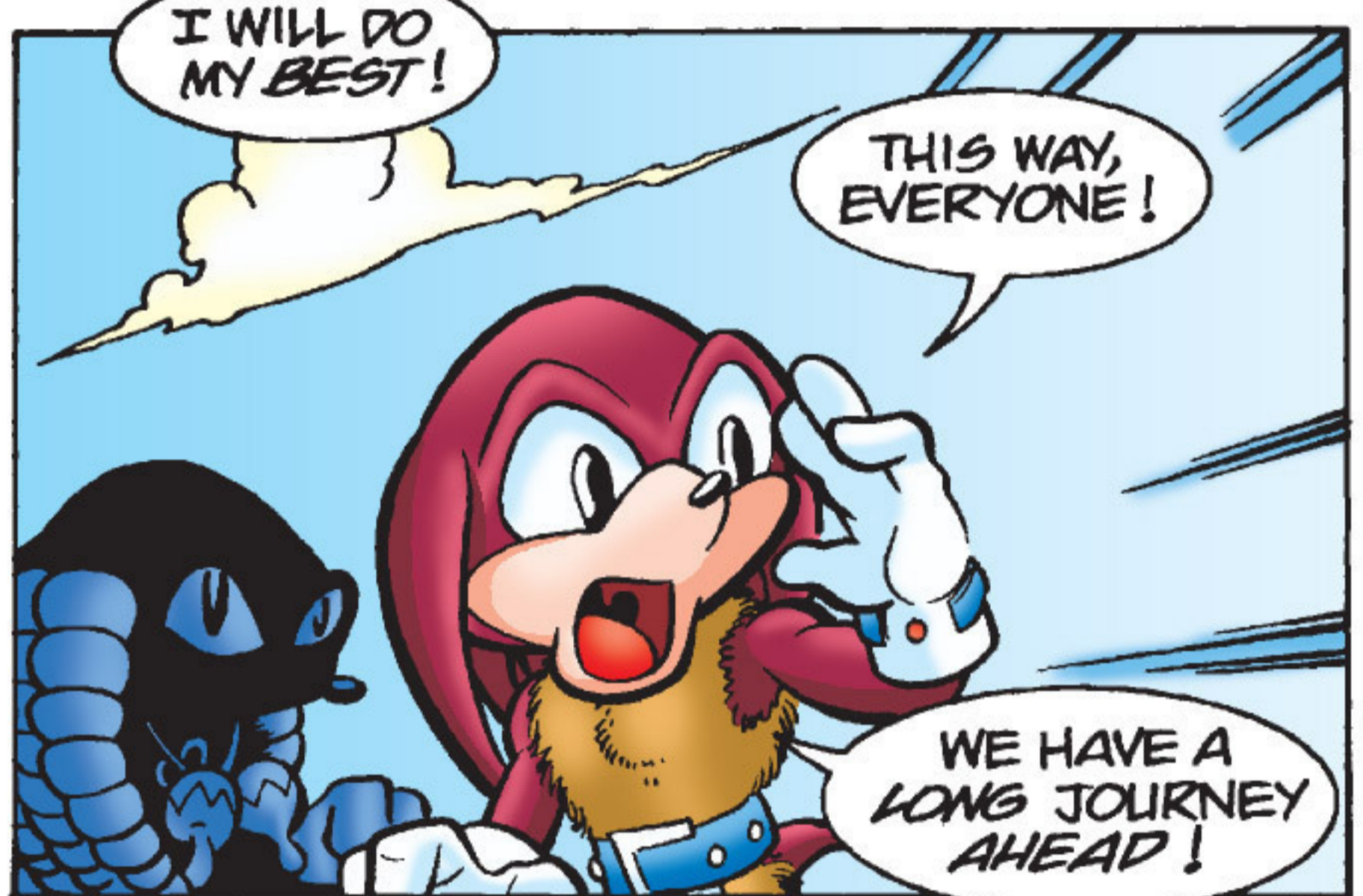
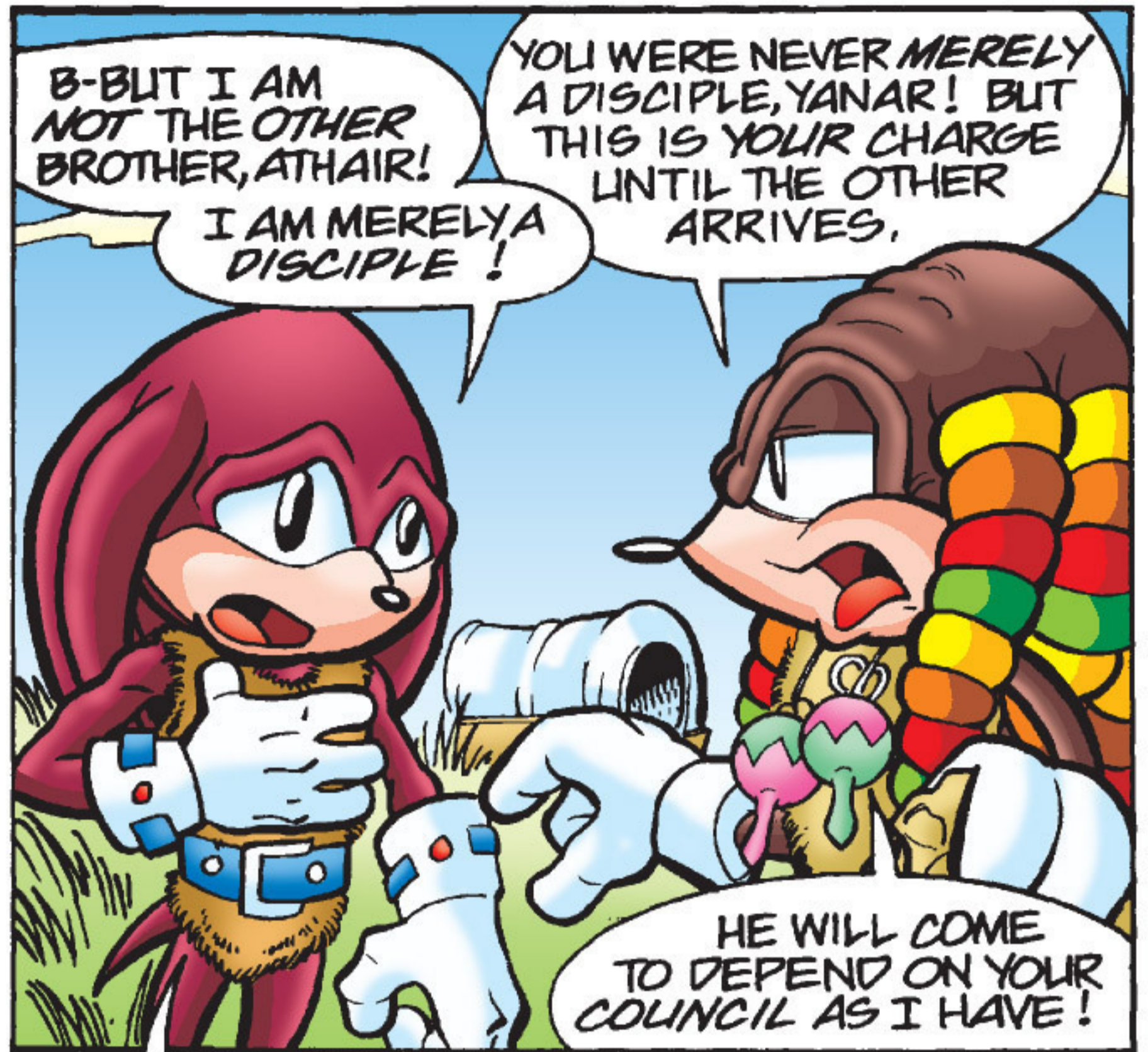
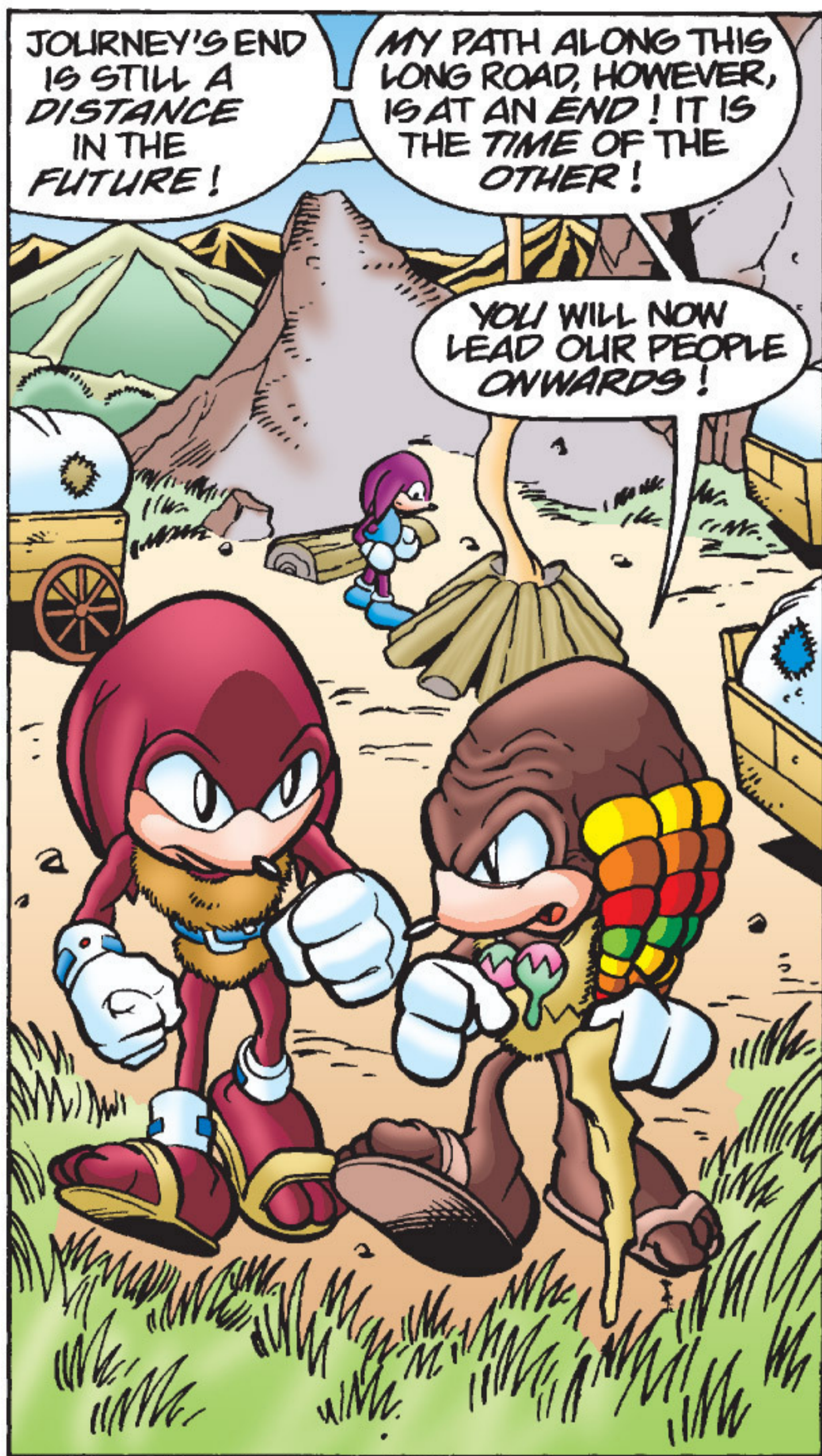
IT'S JUST THAT I'D THOUGHT WE'D FOUND JOURNEY'S END!

IT IS SAID BROTHER ATHAIR COMMUNES WITH THE WALKERS THEMSELVES, CHILD!

IF HE SIGNALS US TO MOVE ON, IT'S NOT FOR US TO QUESTION!

The Other Road Taken





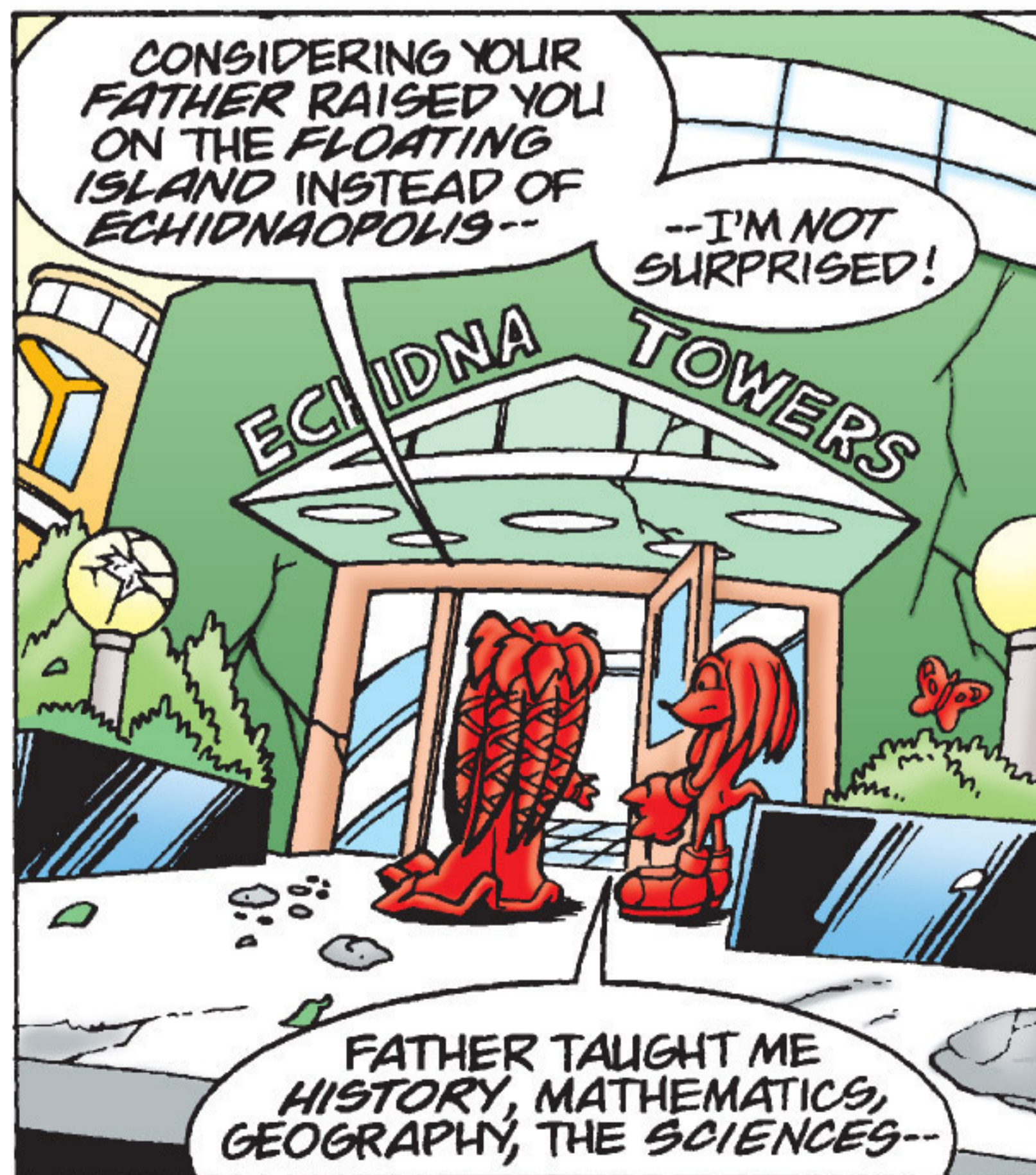
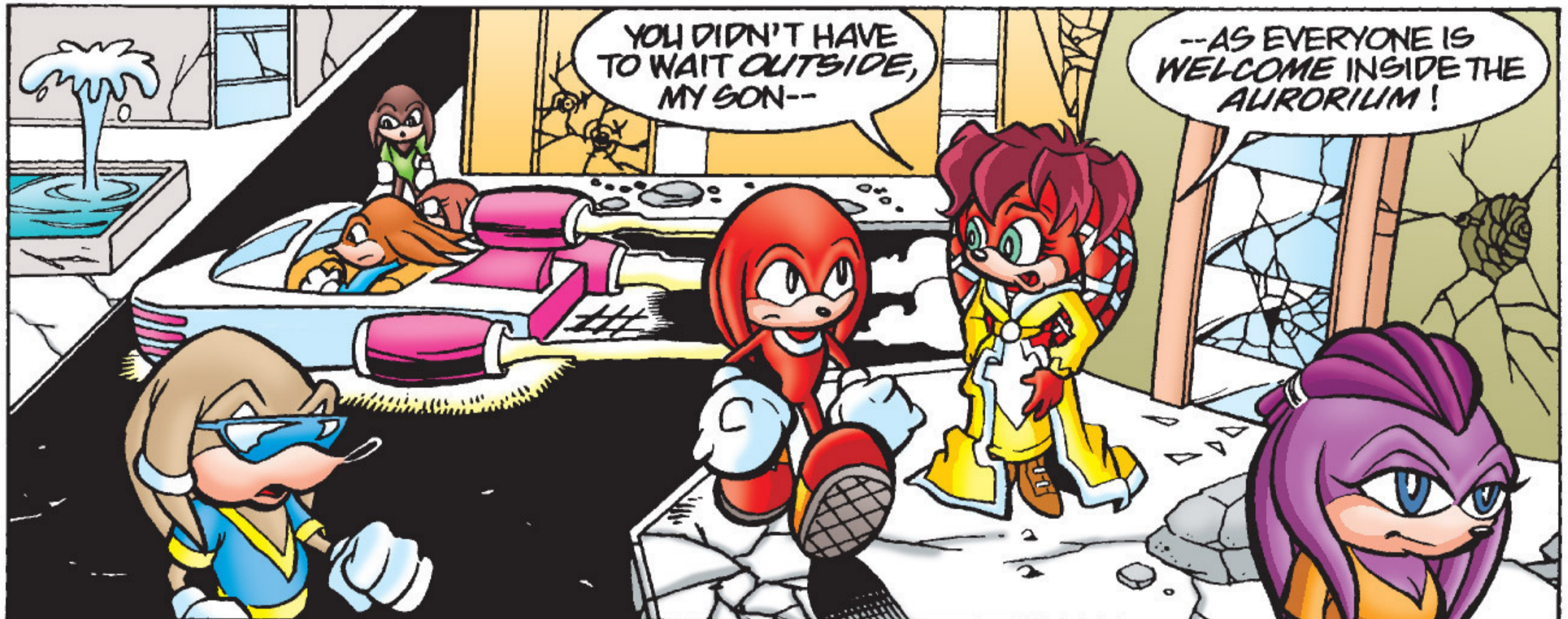
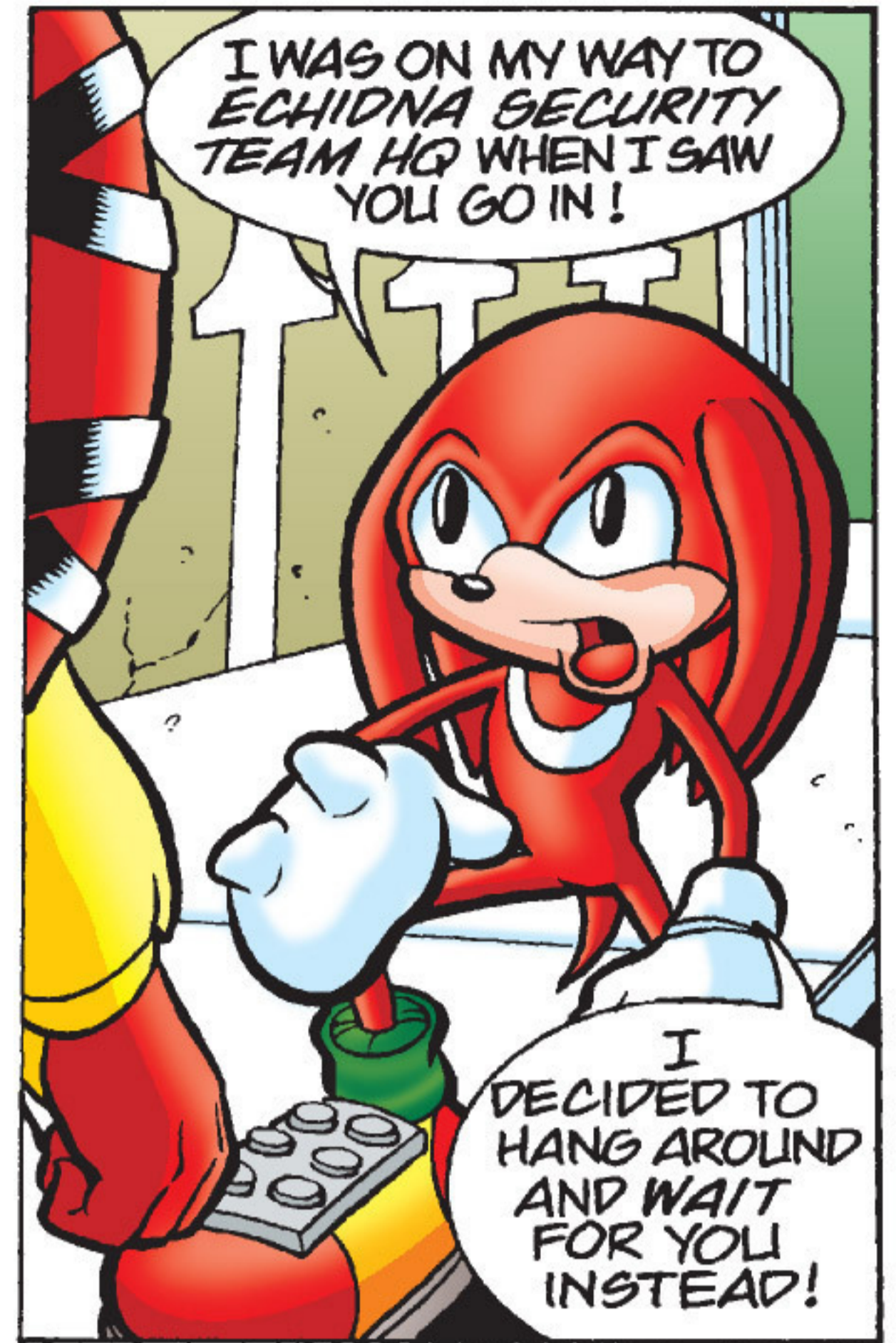
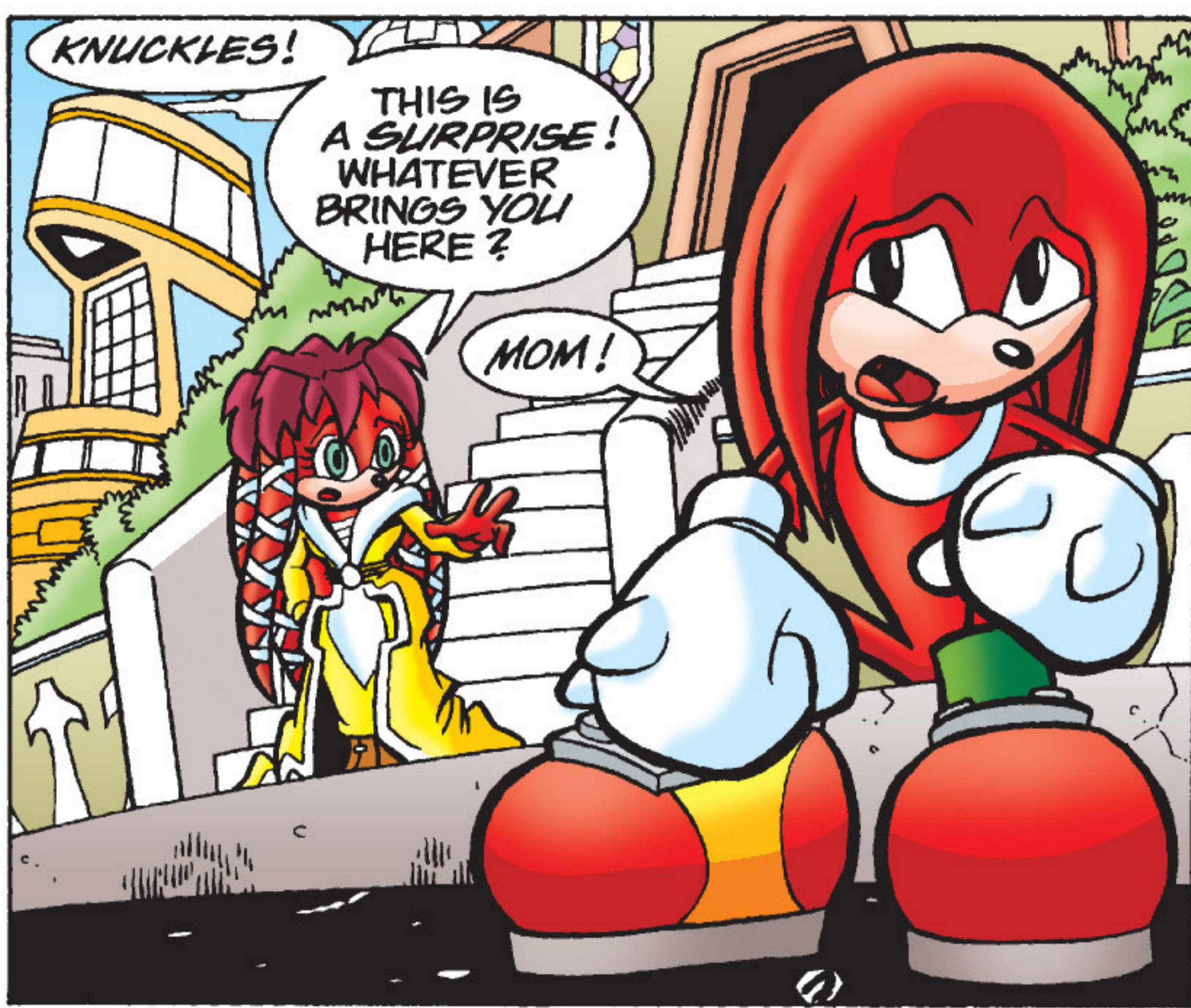
THE ANCIENT ONES BECKON!

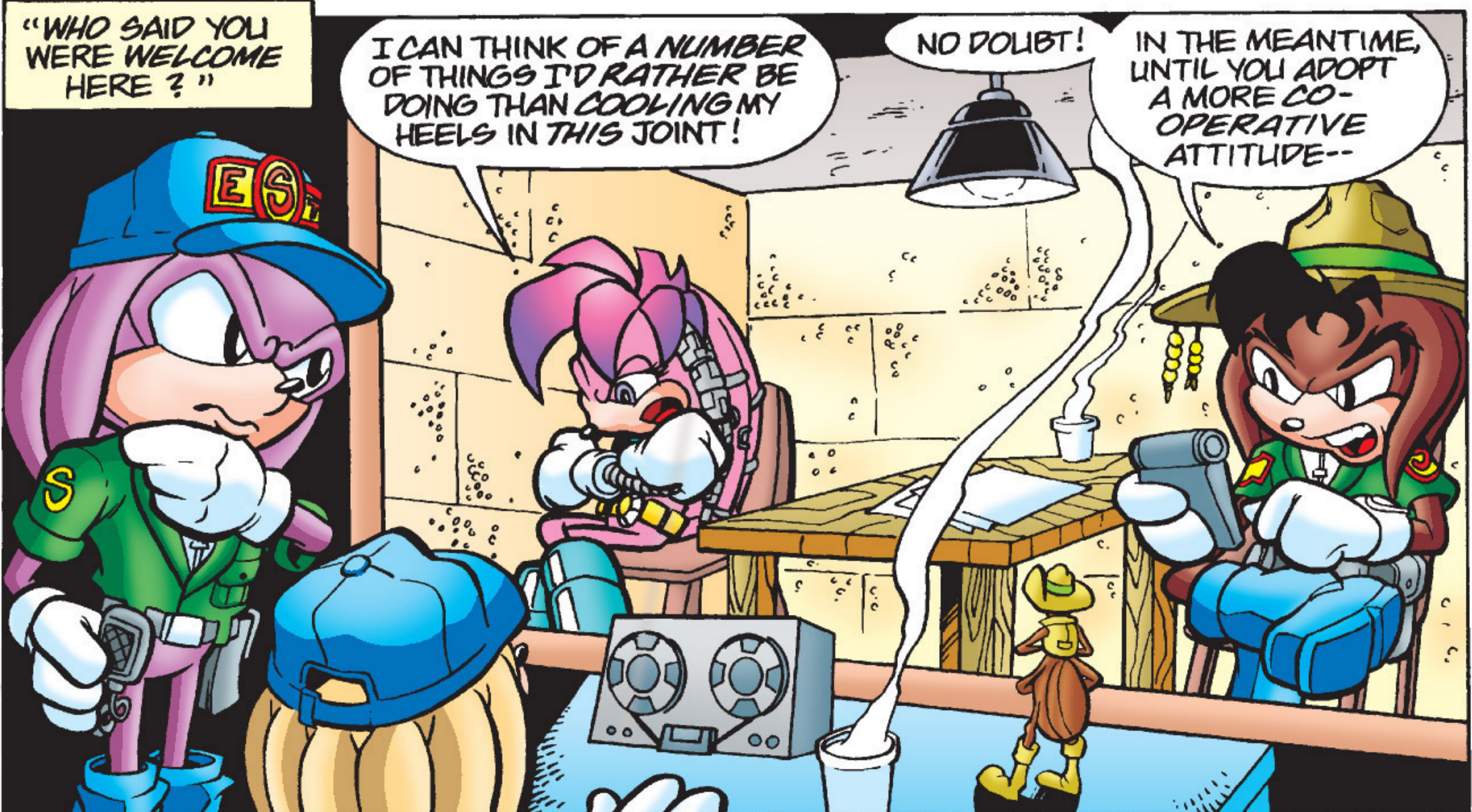
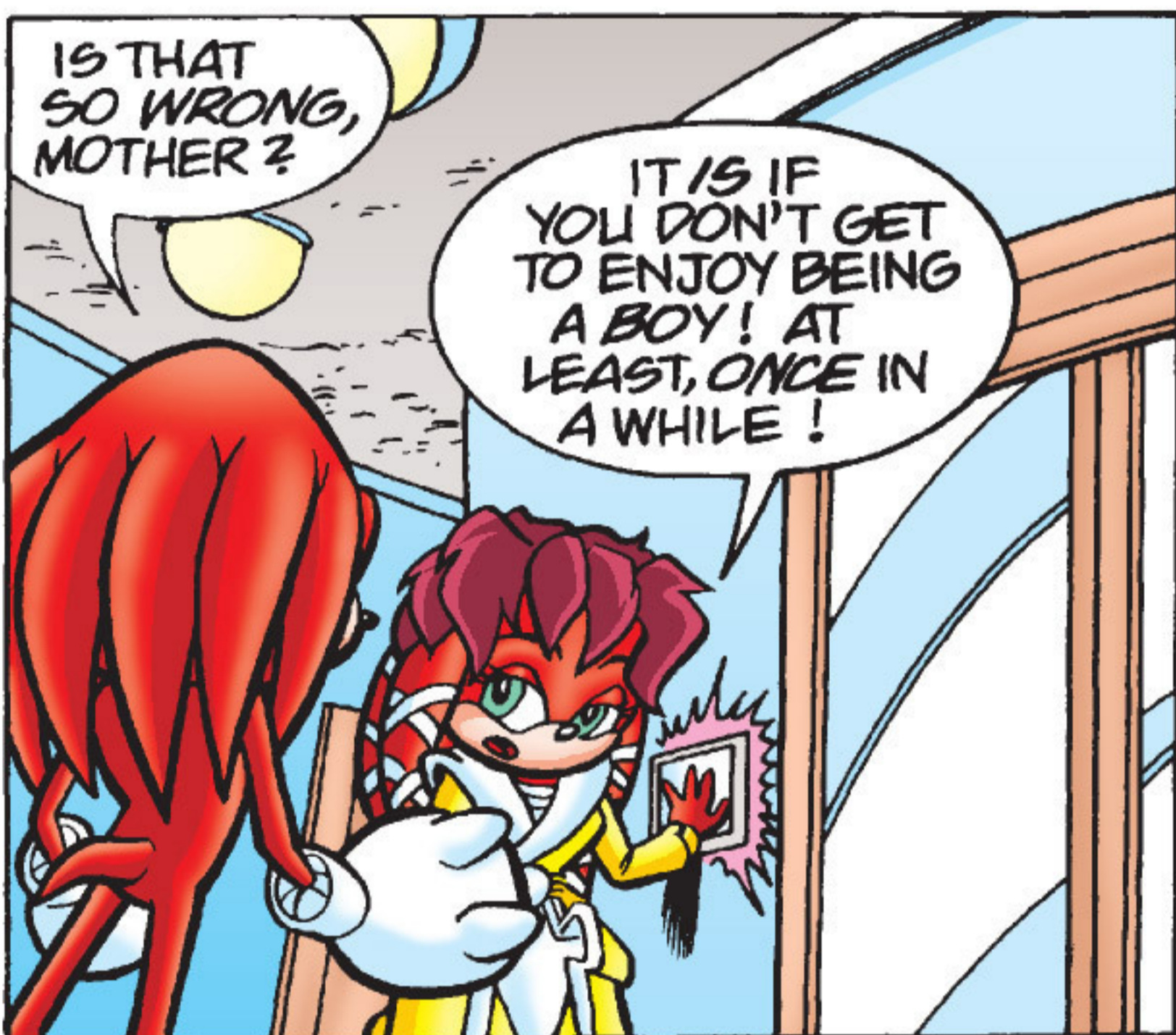
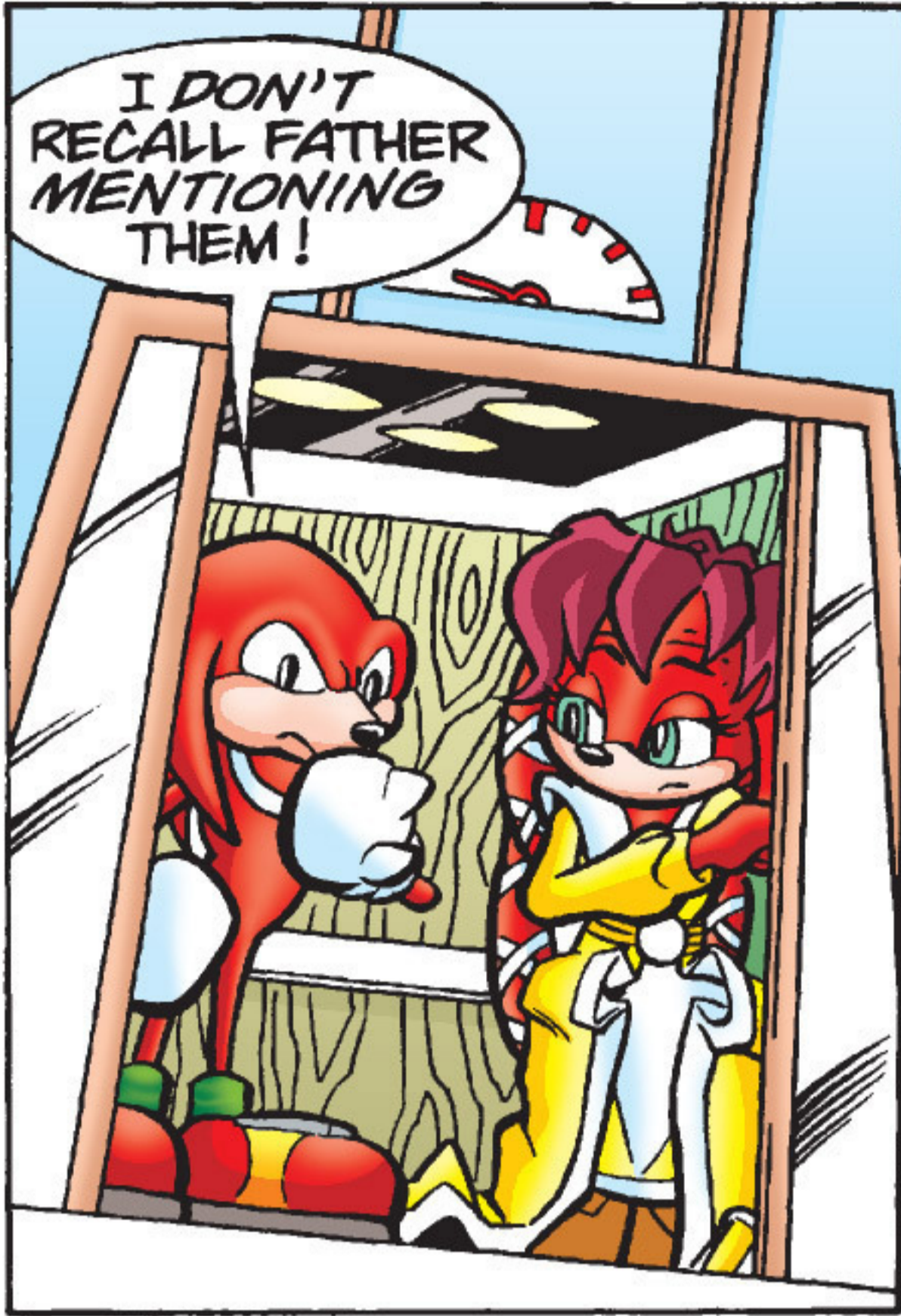
WERE YANAR READY, I WOULD HAVE HIM ASSUME MY MANTLE!

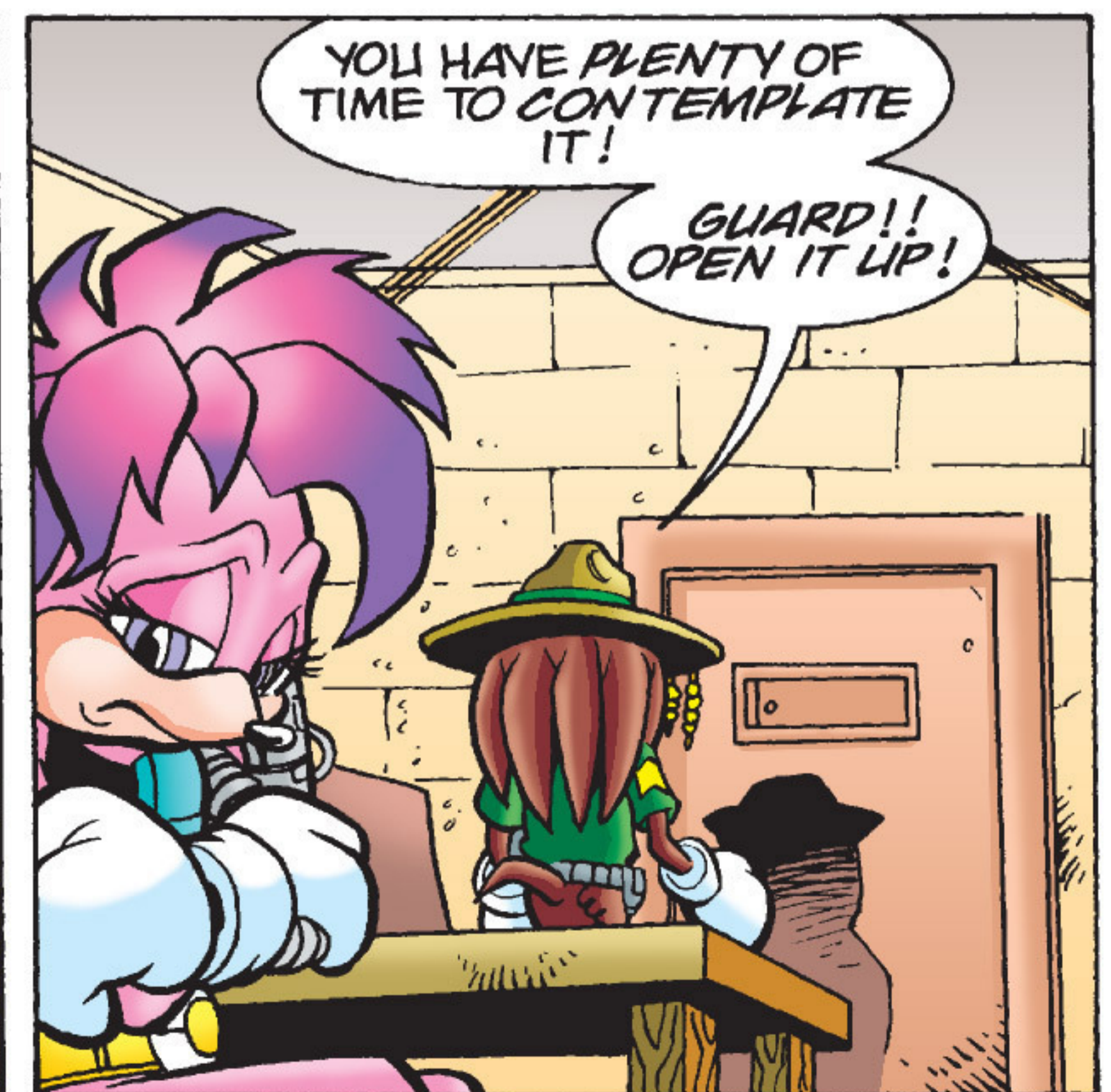
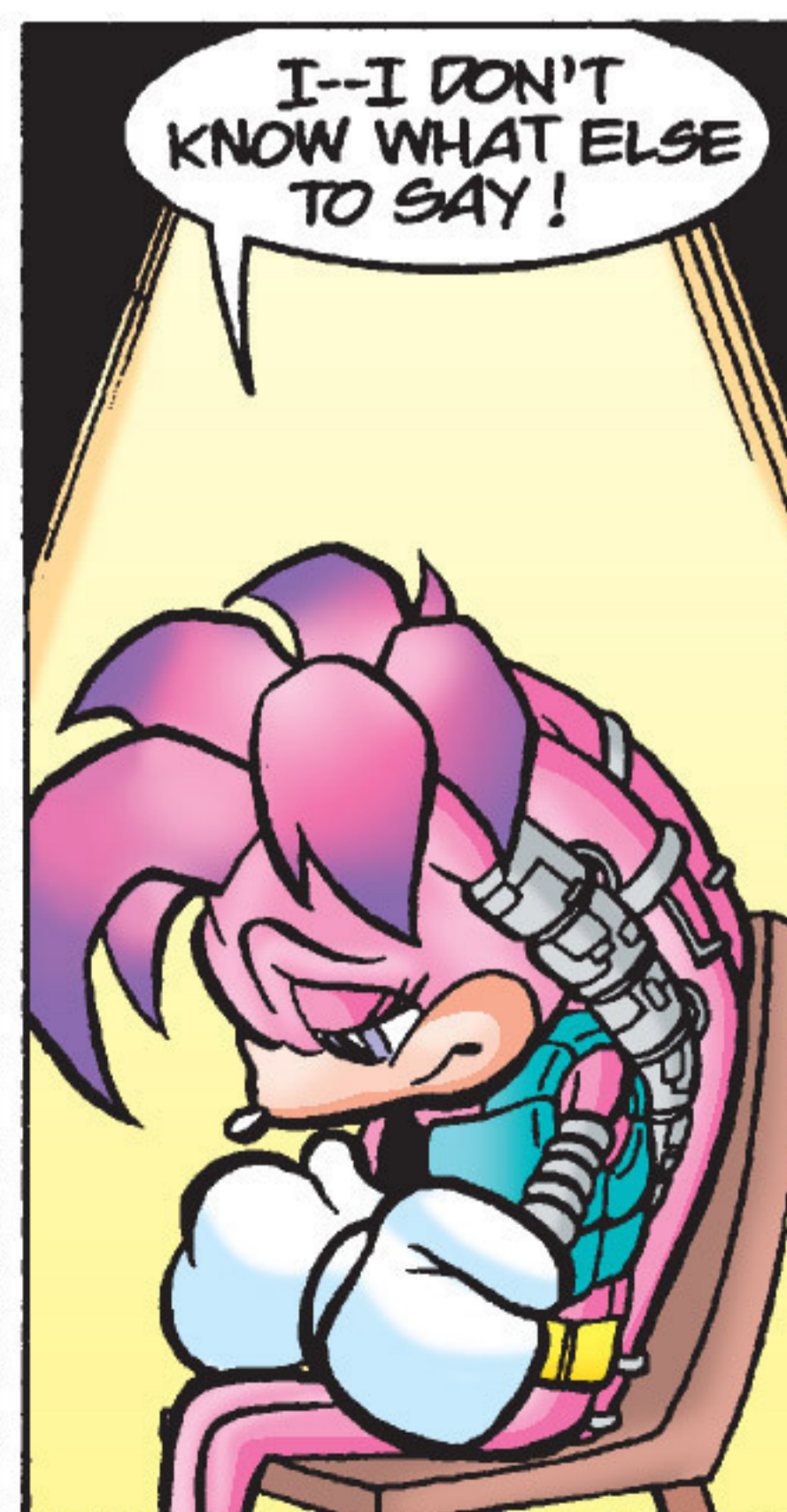
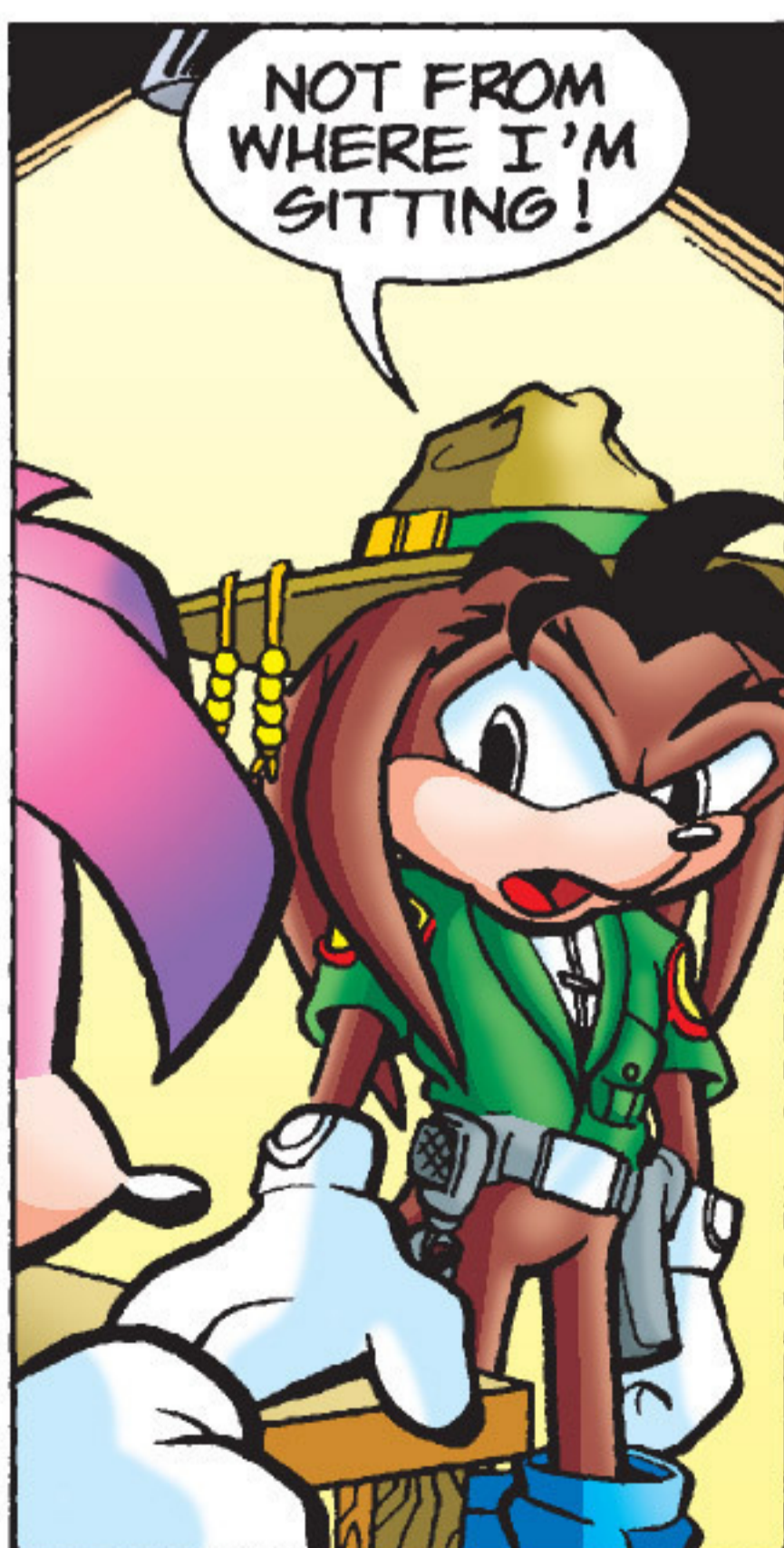
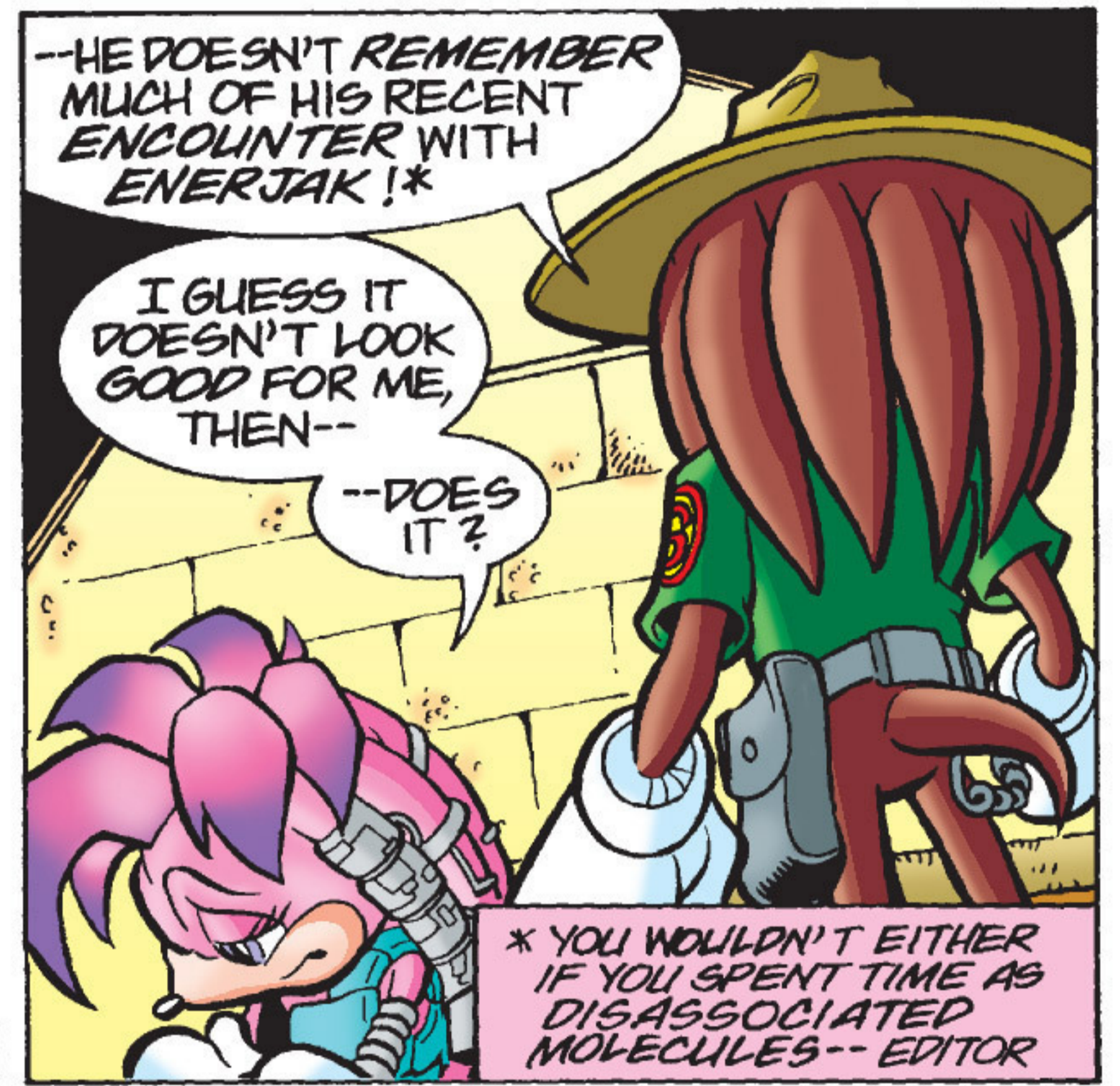
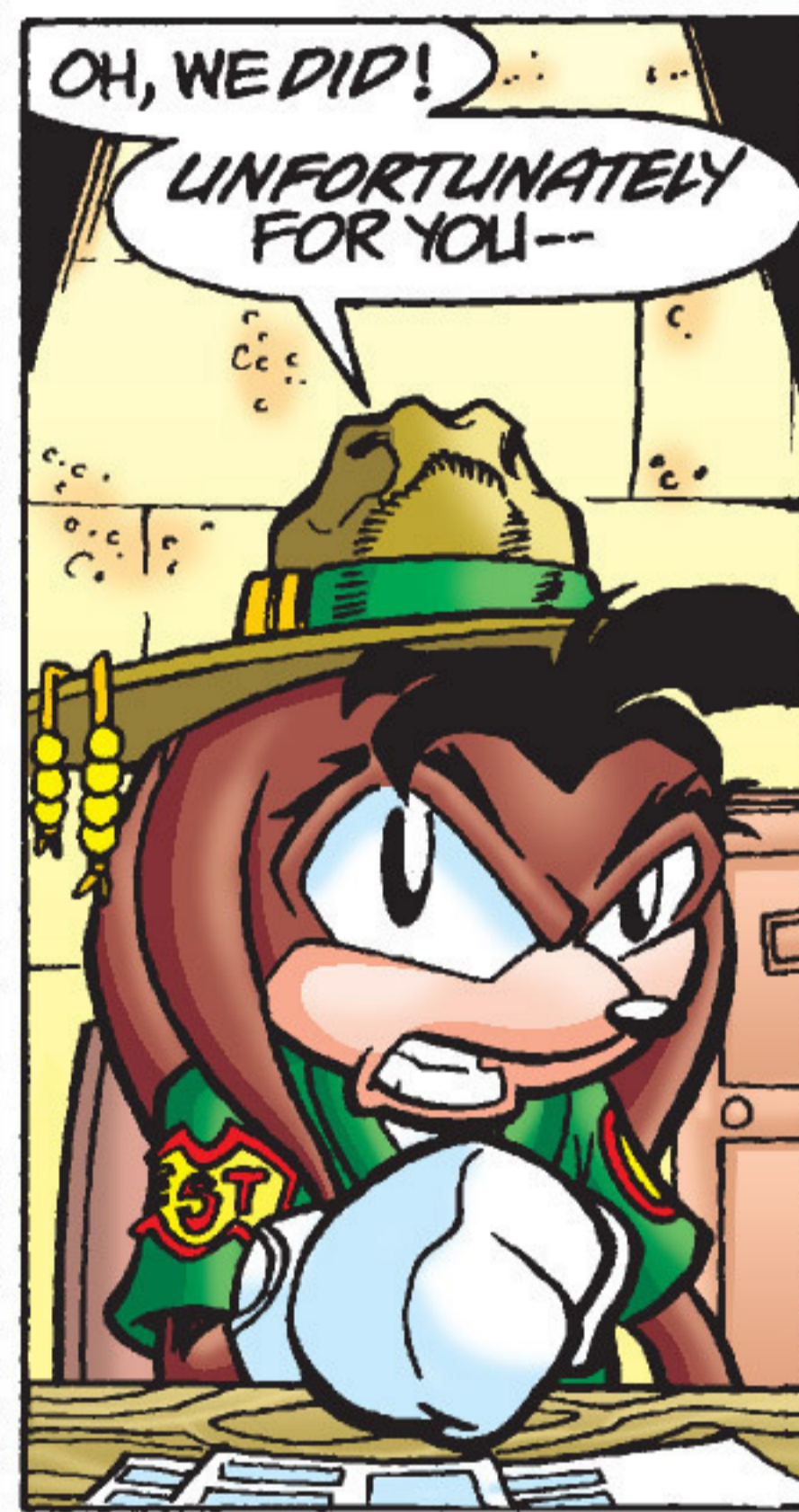
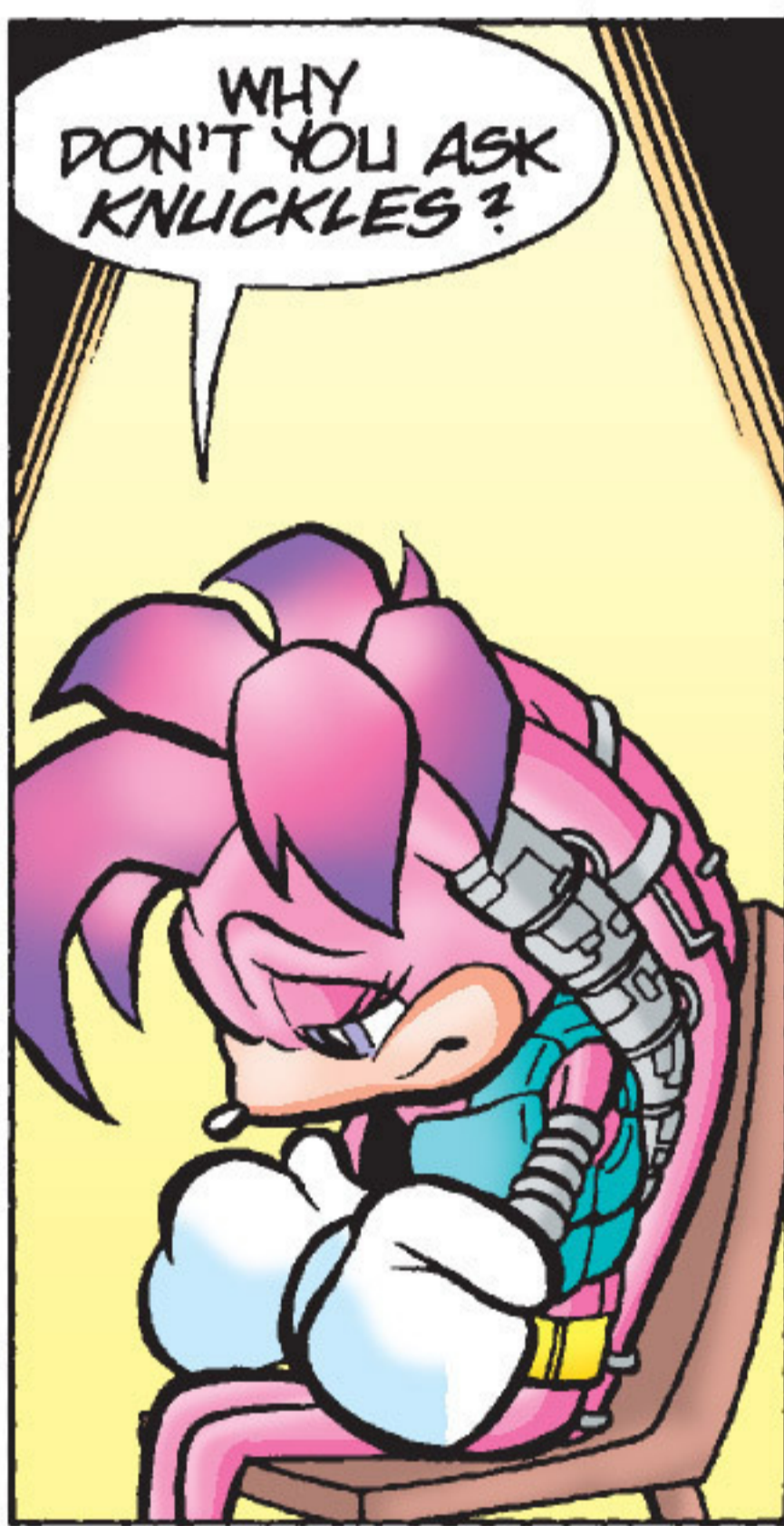
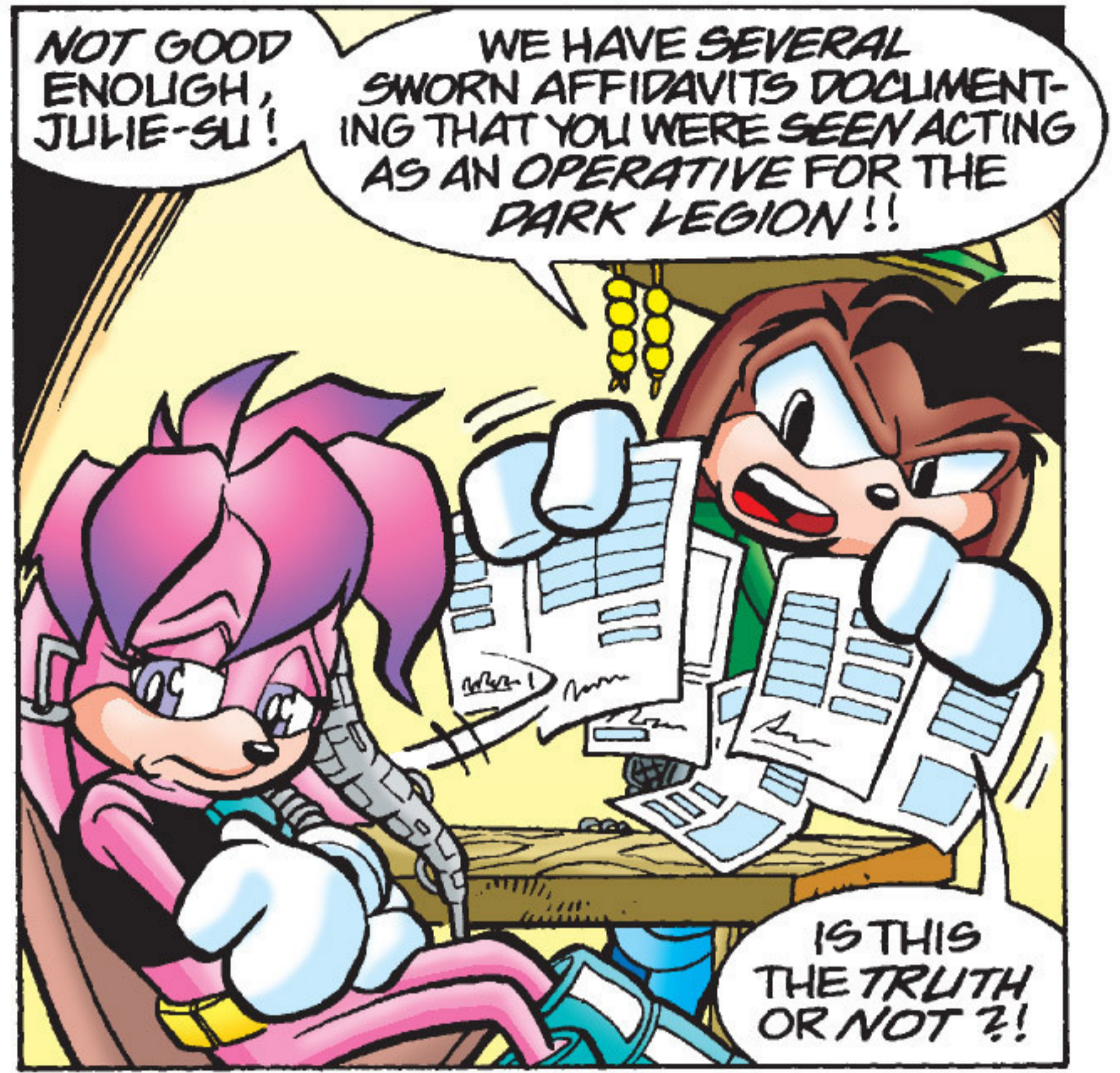
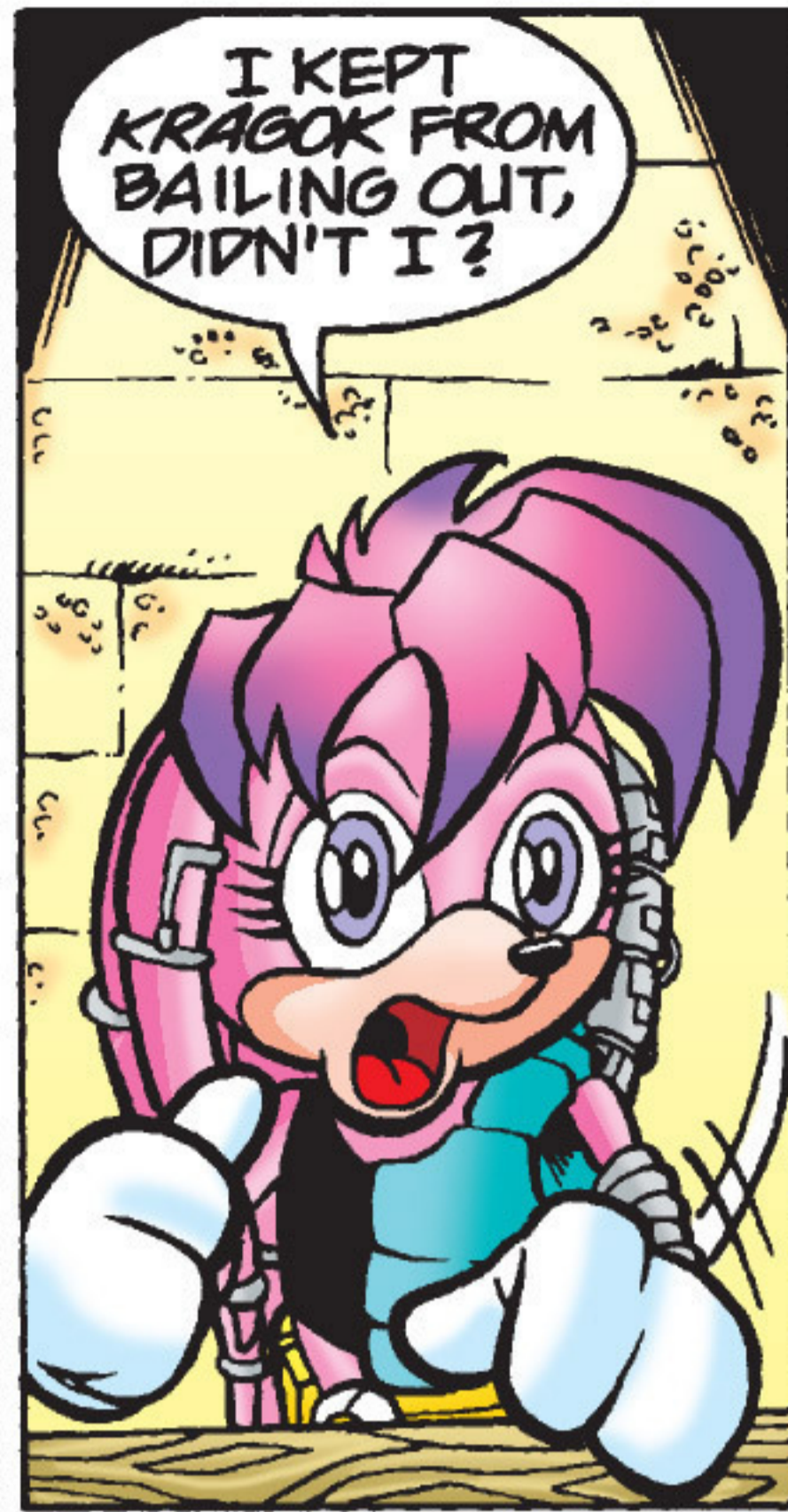
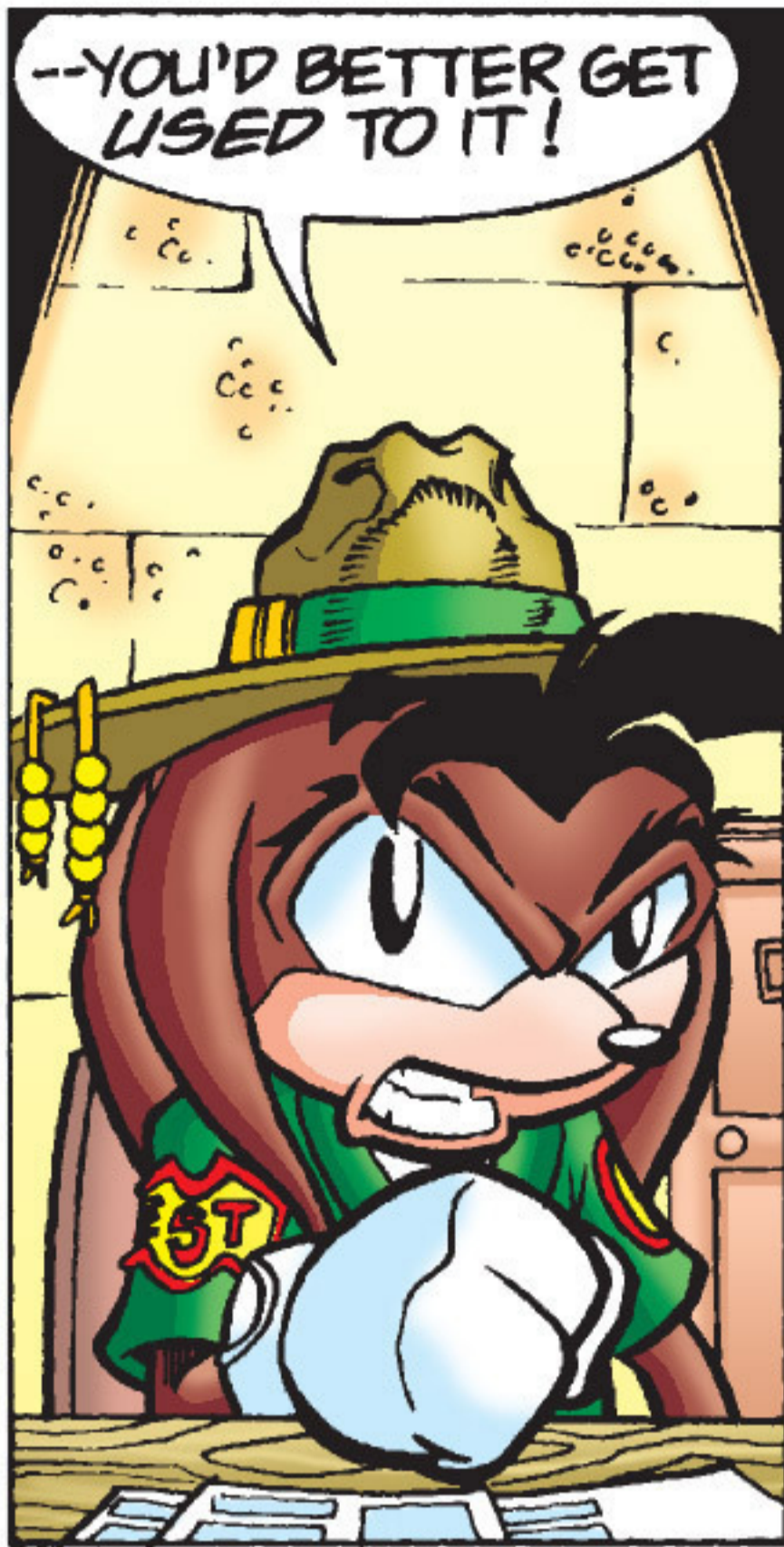
THE WALKERS HAVE DICTATED OTHERWISE--

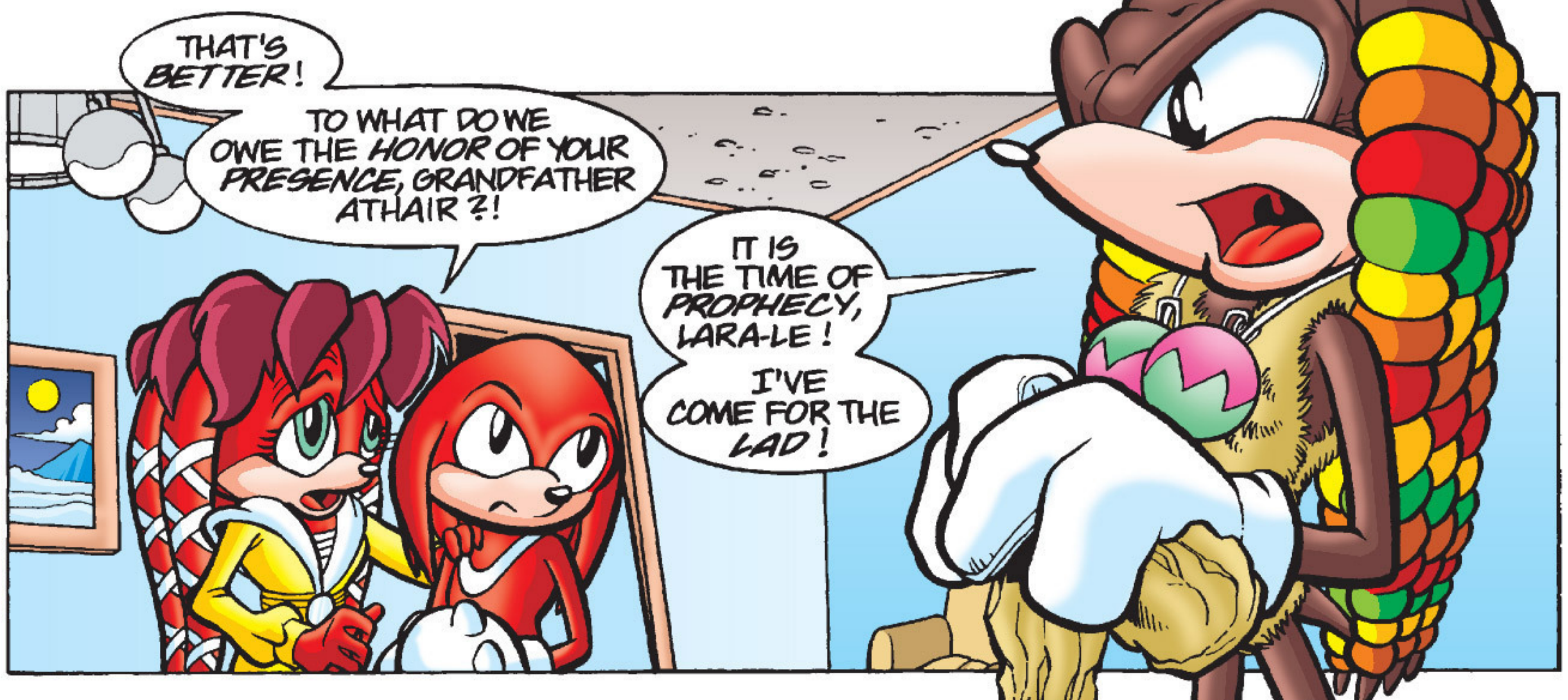
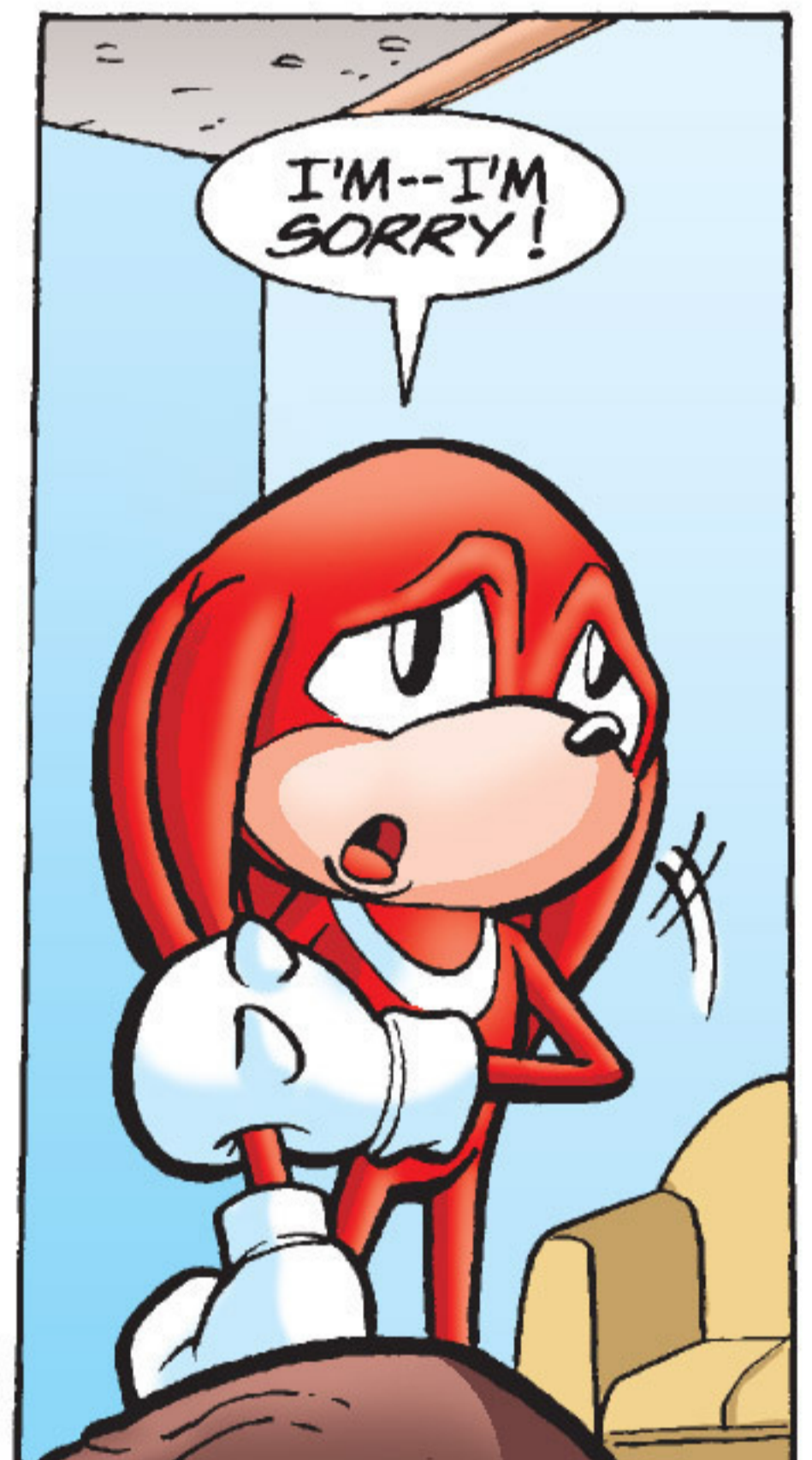
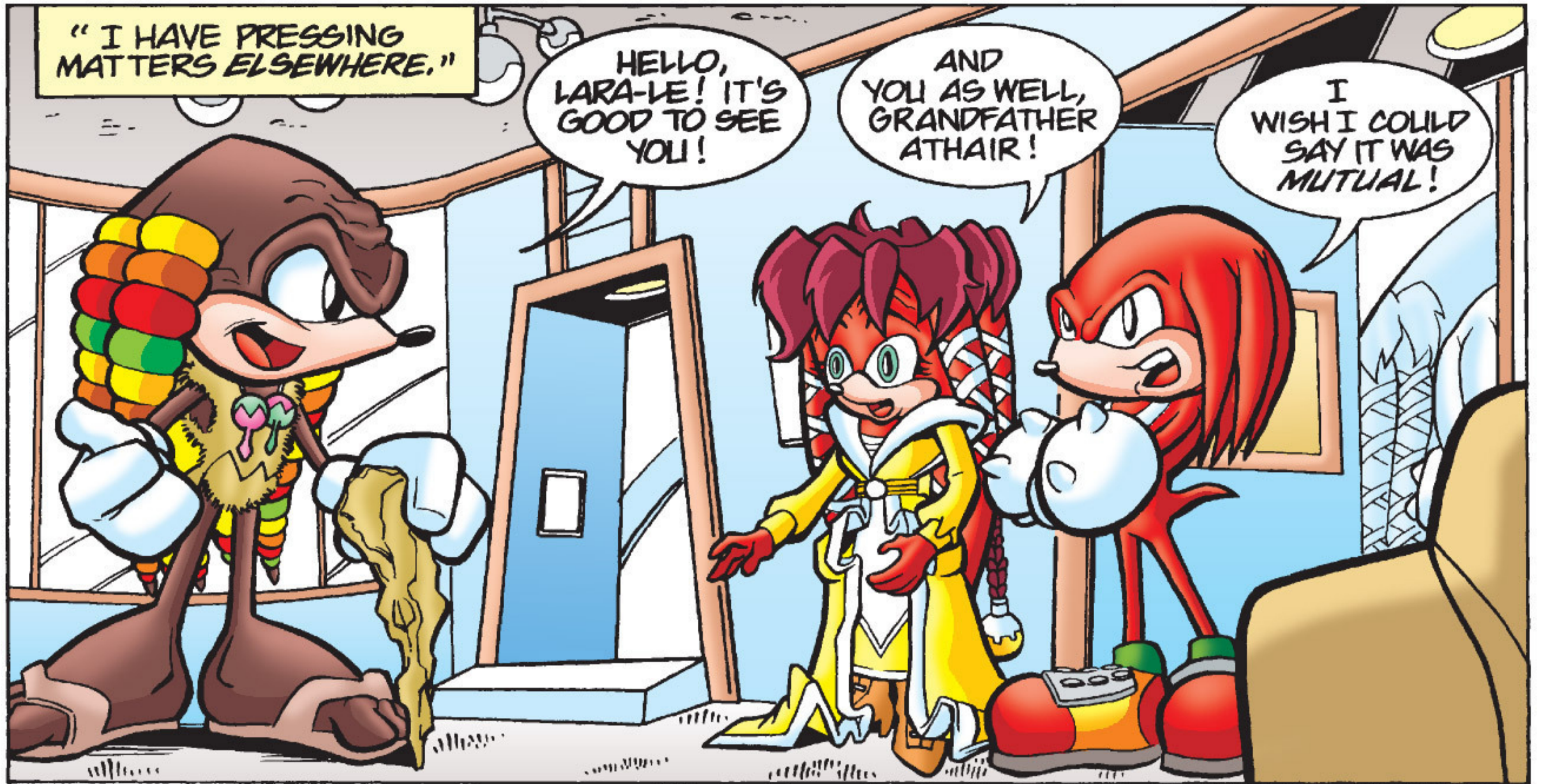
"...AND IT IS HIM I MUST NOW TURN TO!"

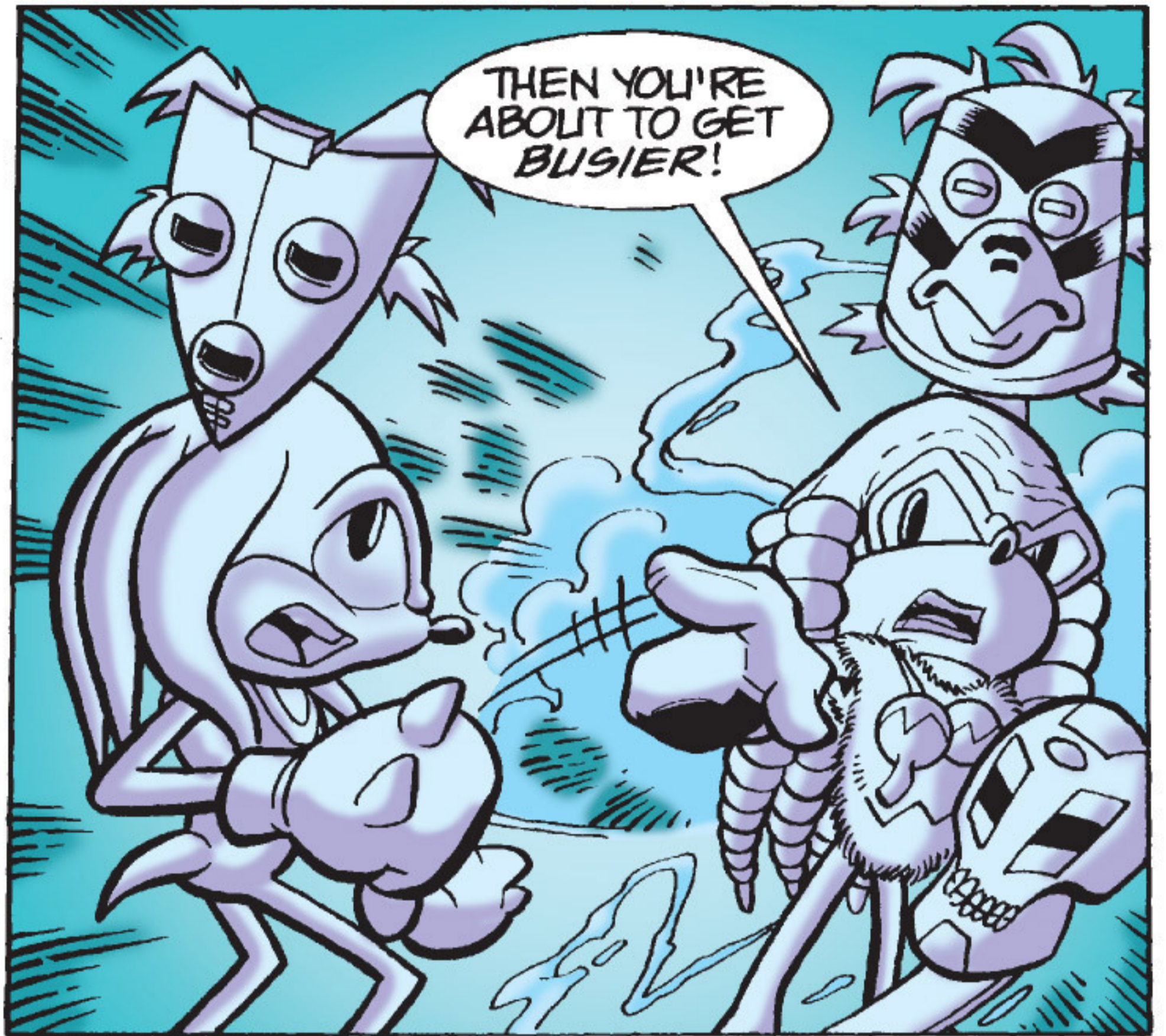






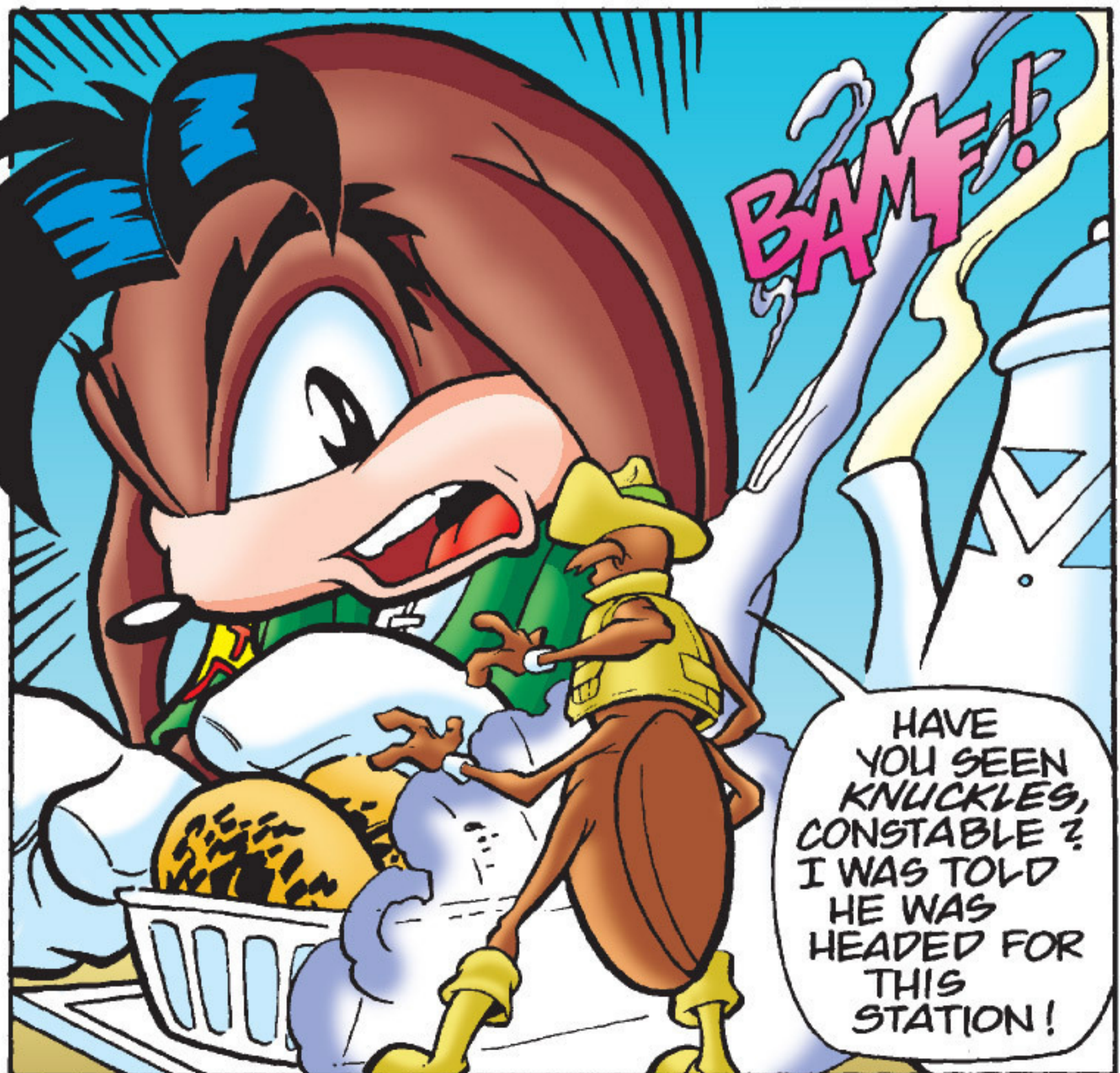
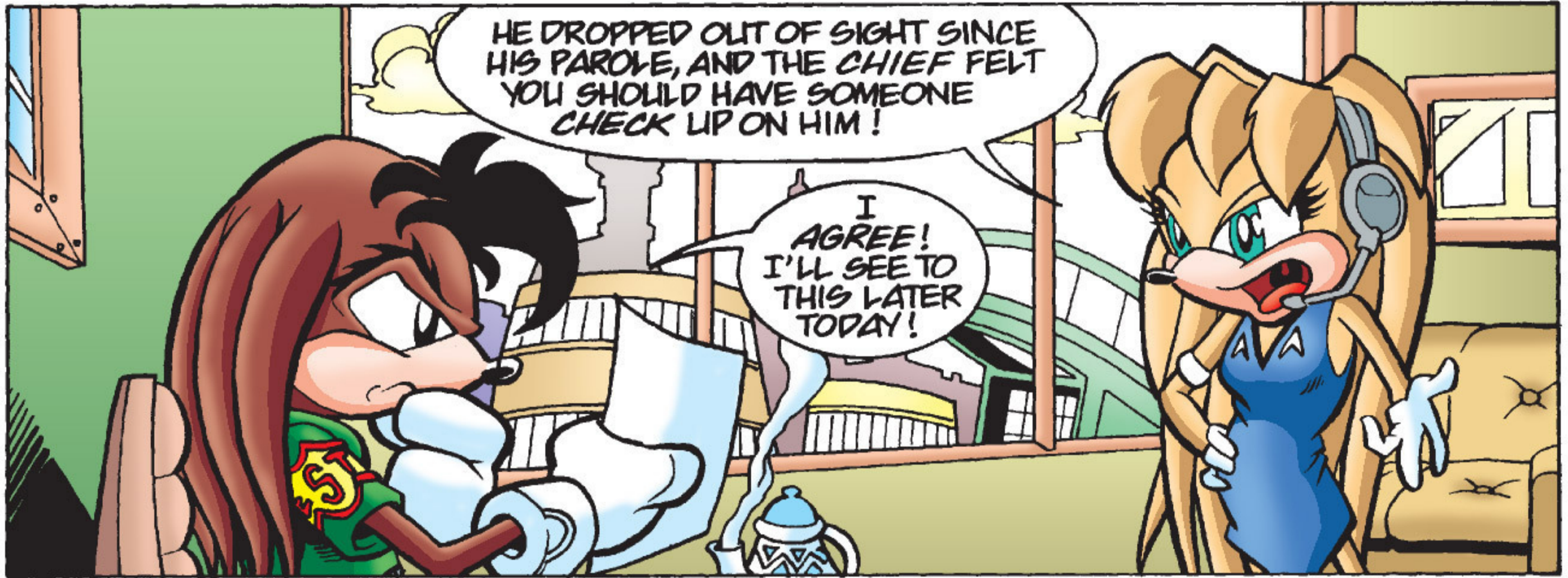
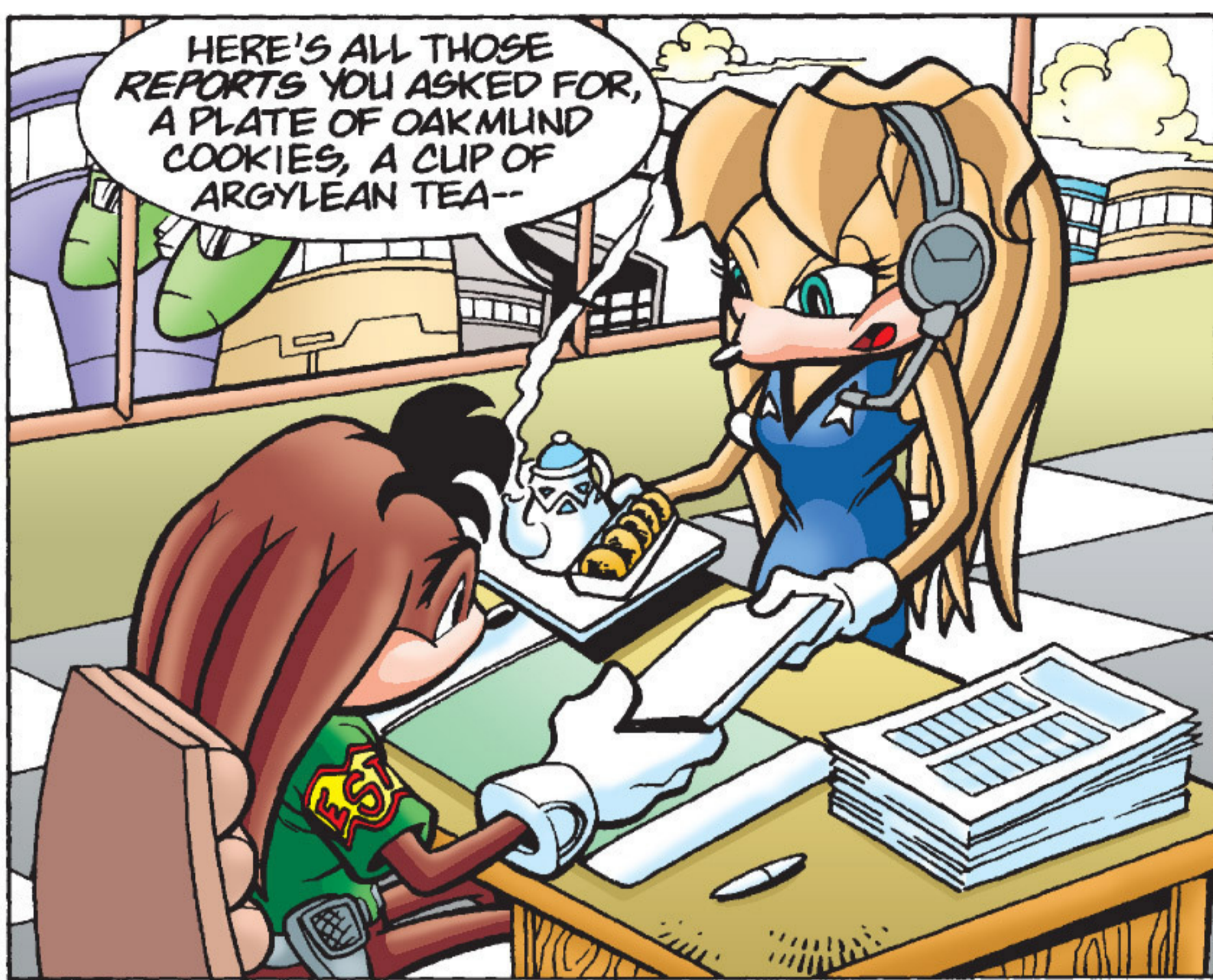


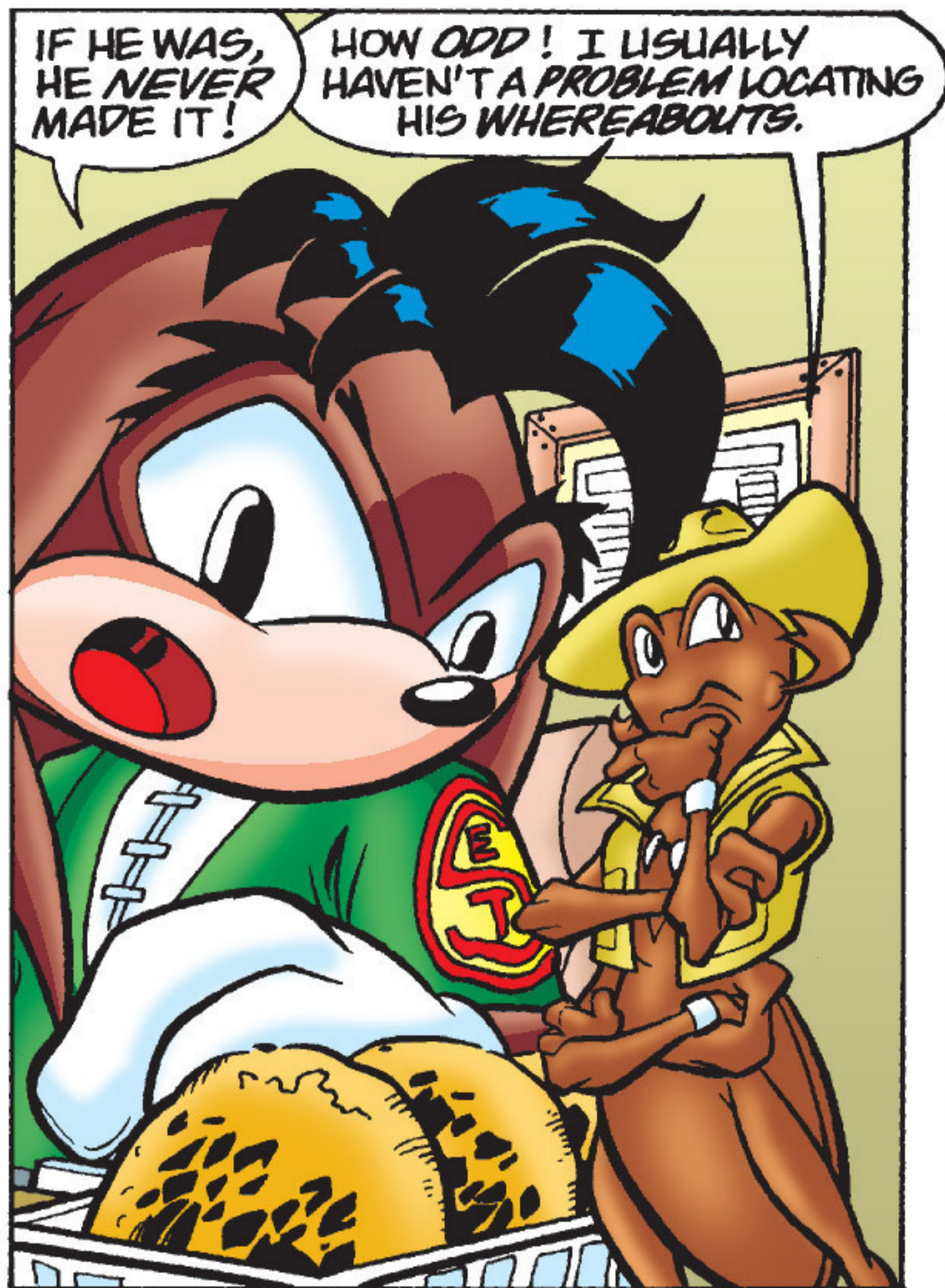




WHA-THUUM!

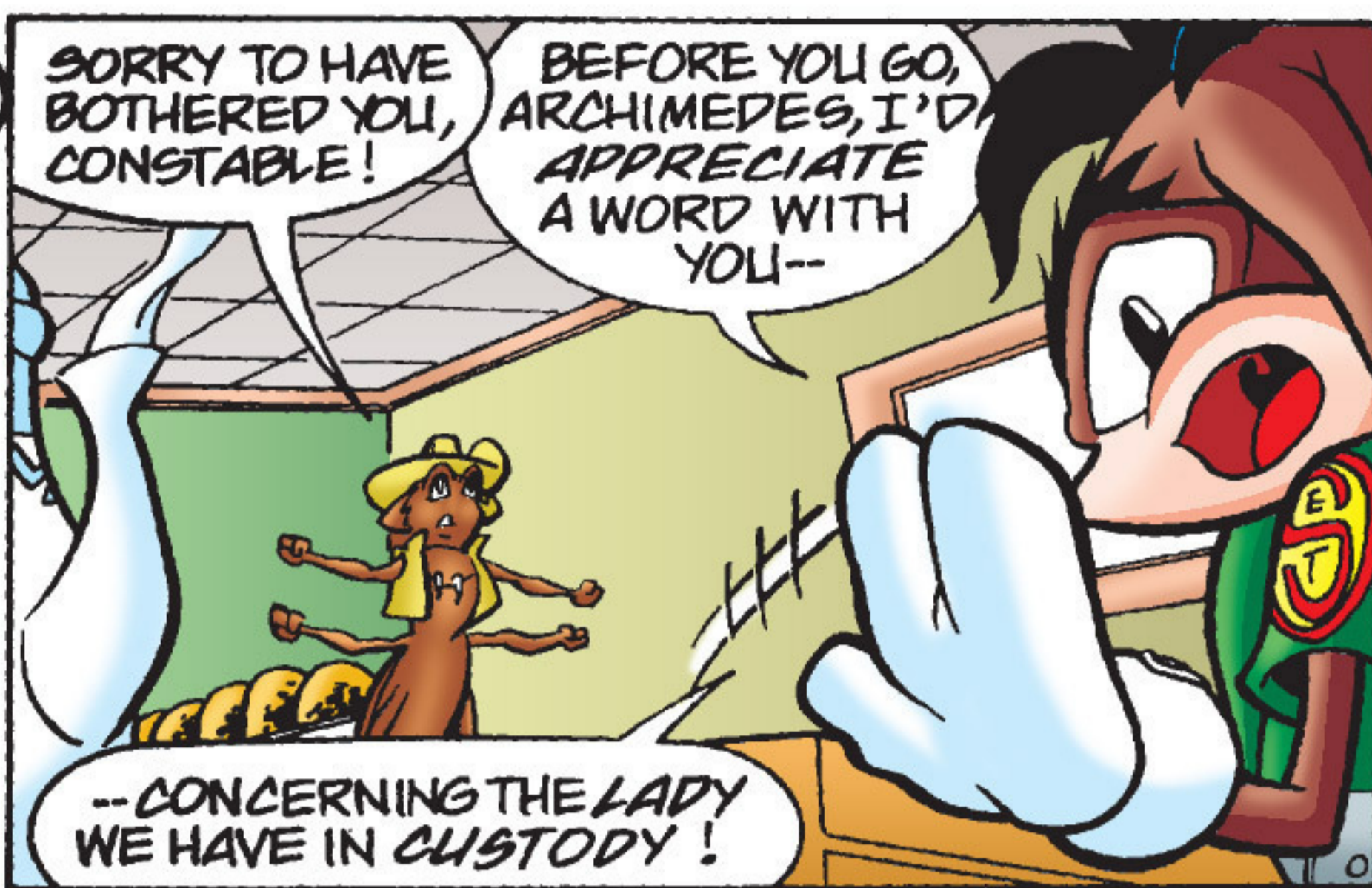






IF HE WAS, HE NEVER MADE IT!

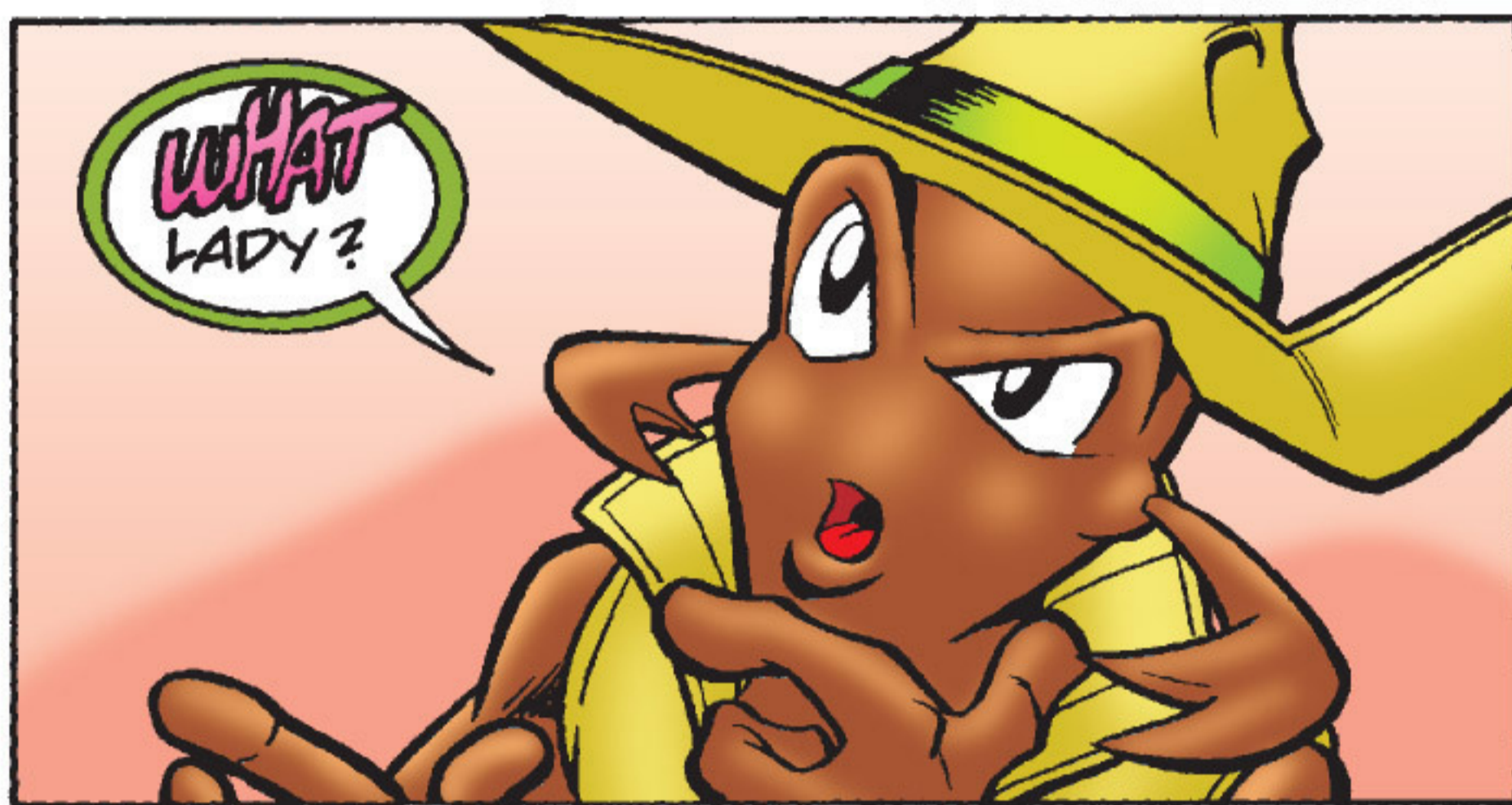
HOW ODD! I USUALLY HAVEN'T A PROBLEM LOCATING HIS WHEREABOUTS.



SORRY TO HAVE BOTHERED YOU, CONSTABLE!

BEFORE YOU GO, ARCHIMEDES, I'D APPRECIATE A WORD WITH YOU--

--CONCERNING THE LADY WE HAVE IN CUSTODY!

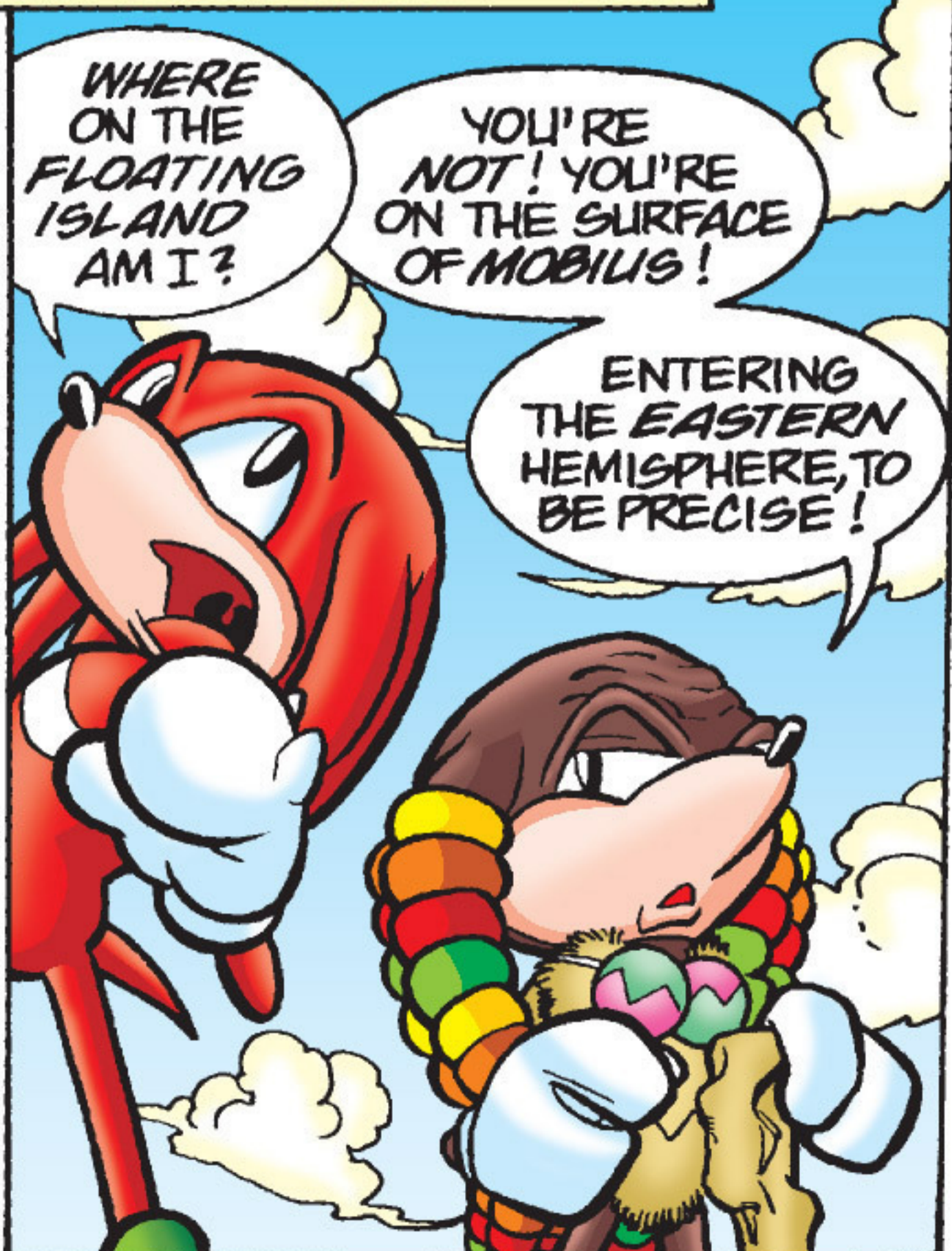


WHAT LADY?



WHY, JULIE-SLI, OF COURSE!

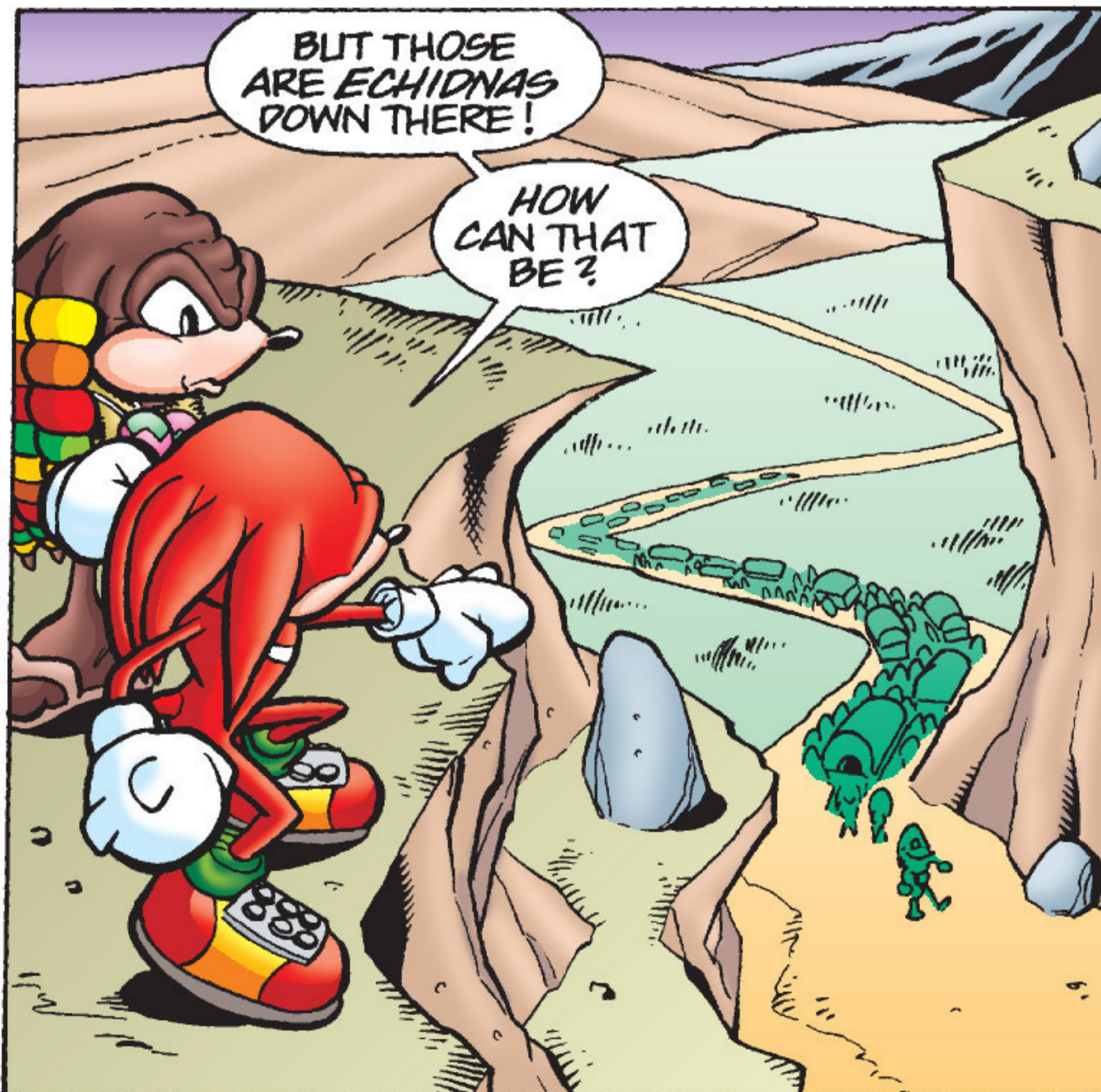
"MAYBE YOU CAN TELL ME A THING OR TWO ABOUT OUR FEMALE FRIEND!"



WHERE ON THE FLOATING ISLAND AM I?

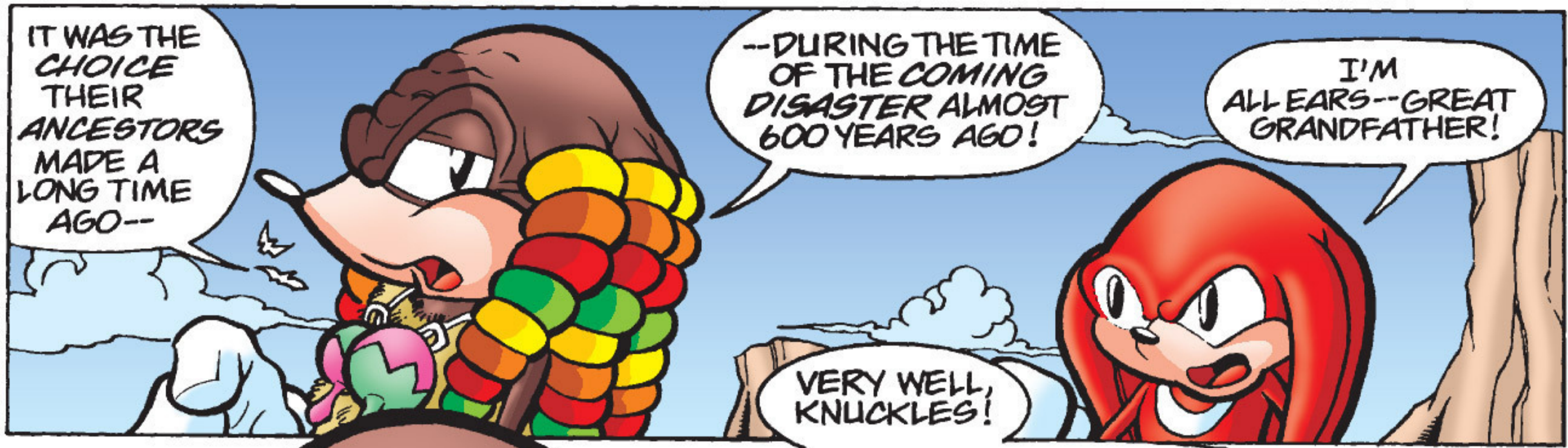
YOU'RE NOT! YOU'RE ON THE SURFACE OF MOBILUS!

ENTERING THE EASTERN HEMISPHERE, TO BE PRECISE!



BUT THOSE ARE ECHIDNAS DOWN THERE!

HOW CAN THAT BE?

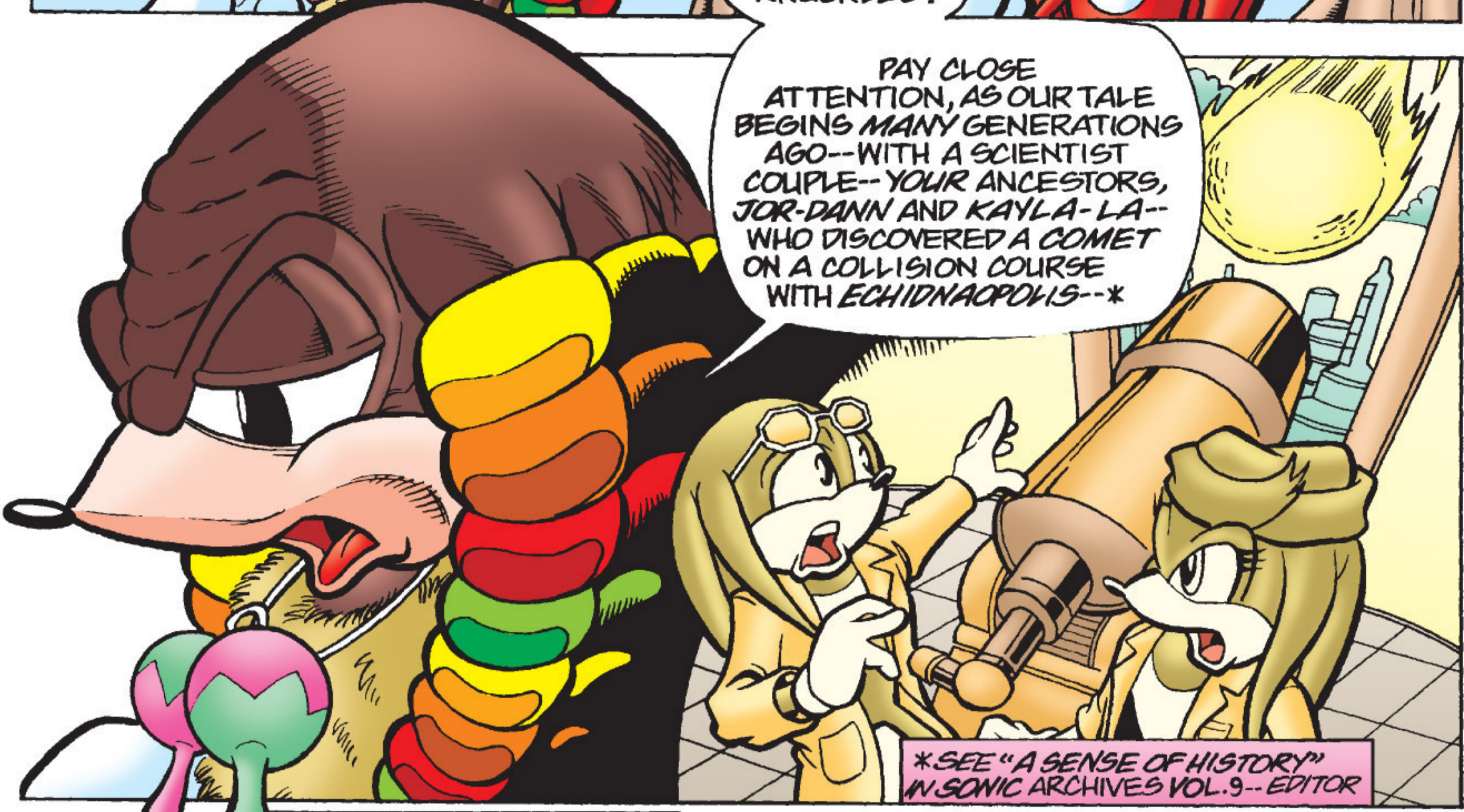


IT WAS THE CHOICE THEIR ANCESTORS MADE A LONG TIME AGO--

--DURING THE TIME OF THE COMING DISASTER ALMOST 600 YEARS AGO!

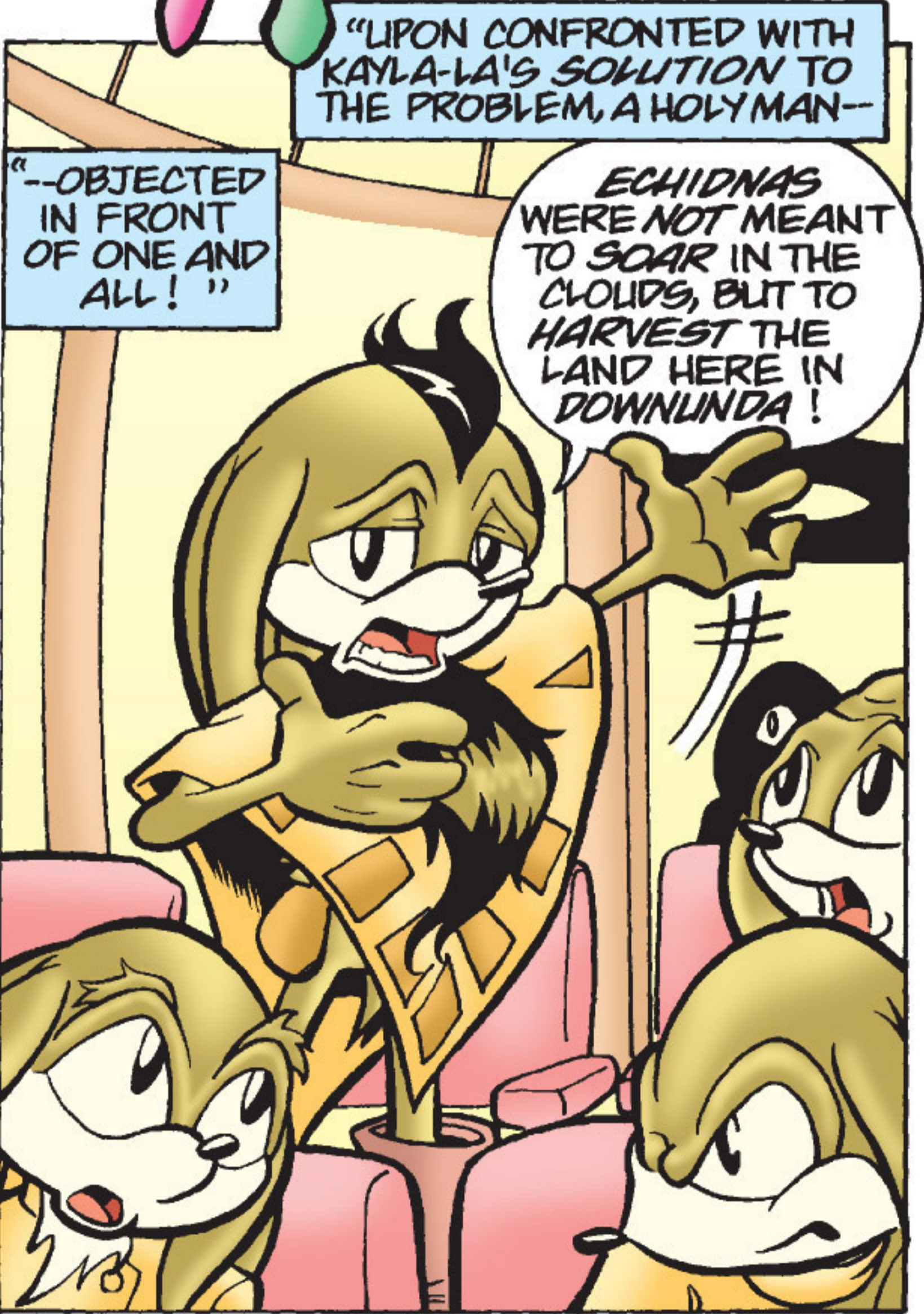
I'M ALL EARS--GREAT GRANDFATHER!

VERY WELL, KNUCKLES!



PAY CLOSE ATTENTION, AS OUR TALE BEGINS MANY GENERATIONS AGO--WITH A SCIENTIST COUPLE-- YOUR ANCESTORS, JOR-DANN AND KAYLA-LA-- WHO DISCOVERED A COMET ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH ECHIDNAOPOLIS--*

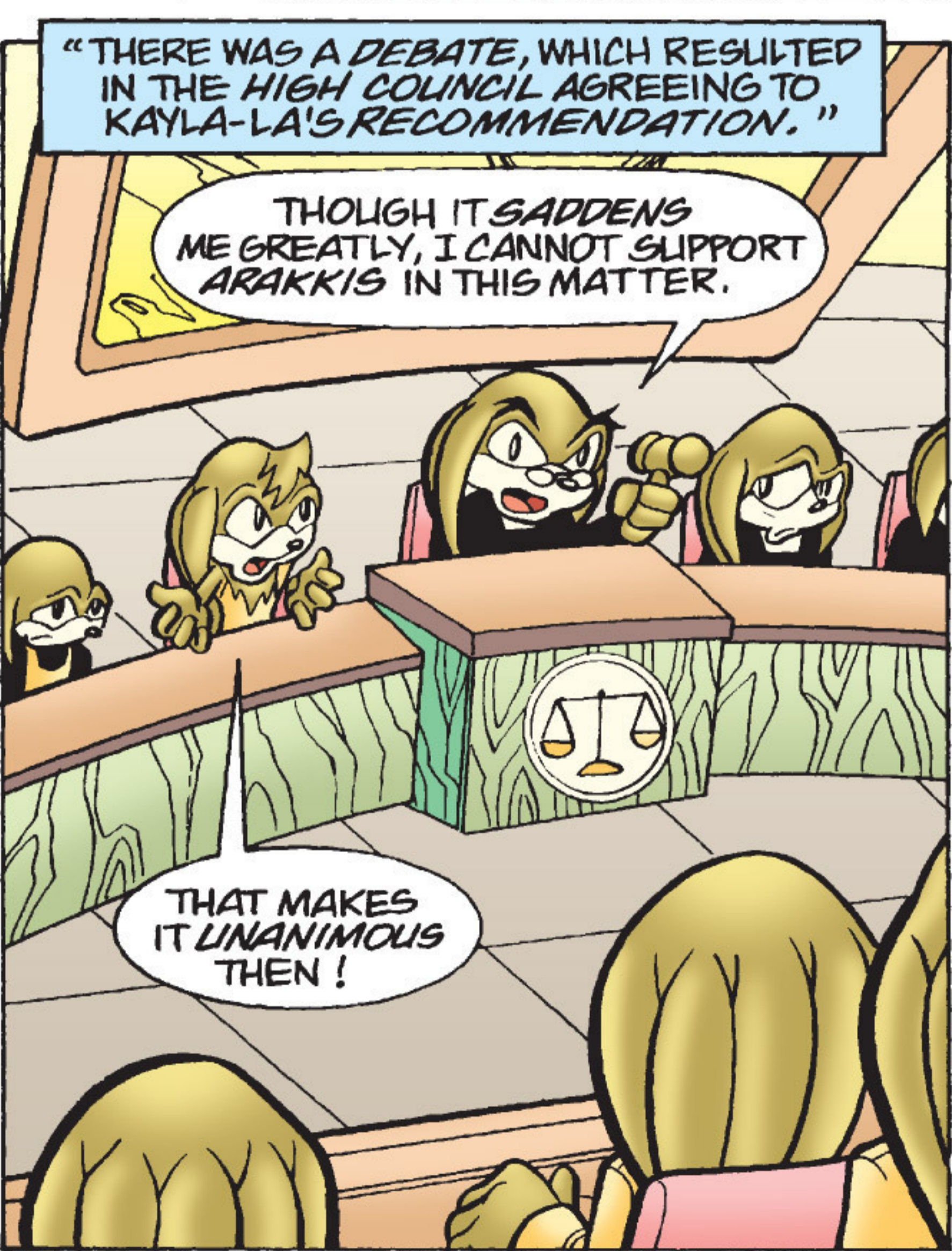
*SEE "A SENSE OF HISTORY" IN SONIC ARCHIVES VOL. 9-- EDITOR



"UPON CONFRONTED WITH KAYLA-LA'S SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, A HOLY MAN--

--OBJECTED IN FRONT OF ONE AND ALL!"

ECHIDNAS WERE NOT MEANT TO SOAR IN THE CLOUDS, BUT TO HARVEST THE LAND HERE IN DOWNUNDA!



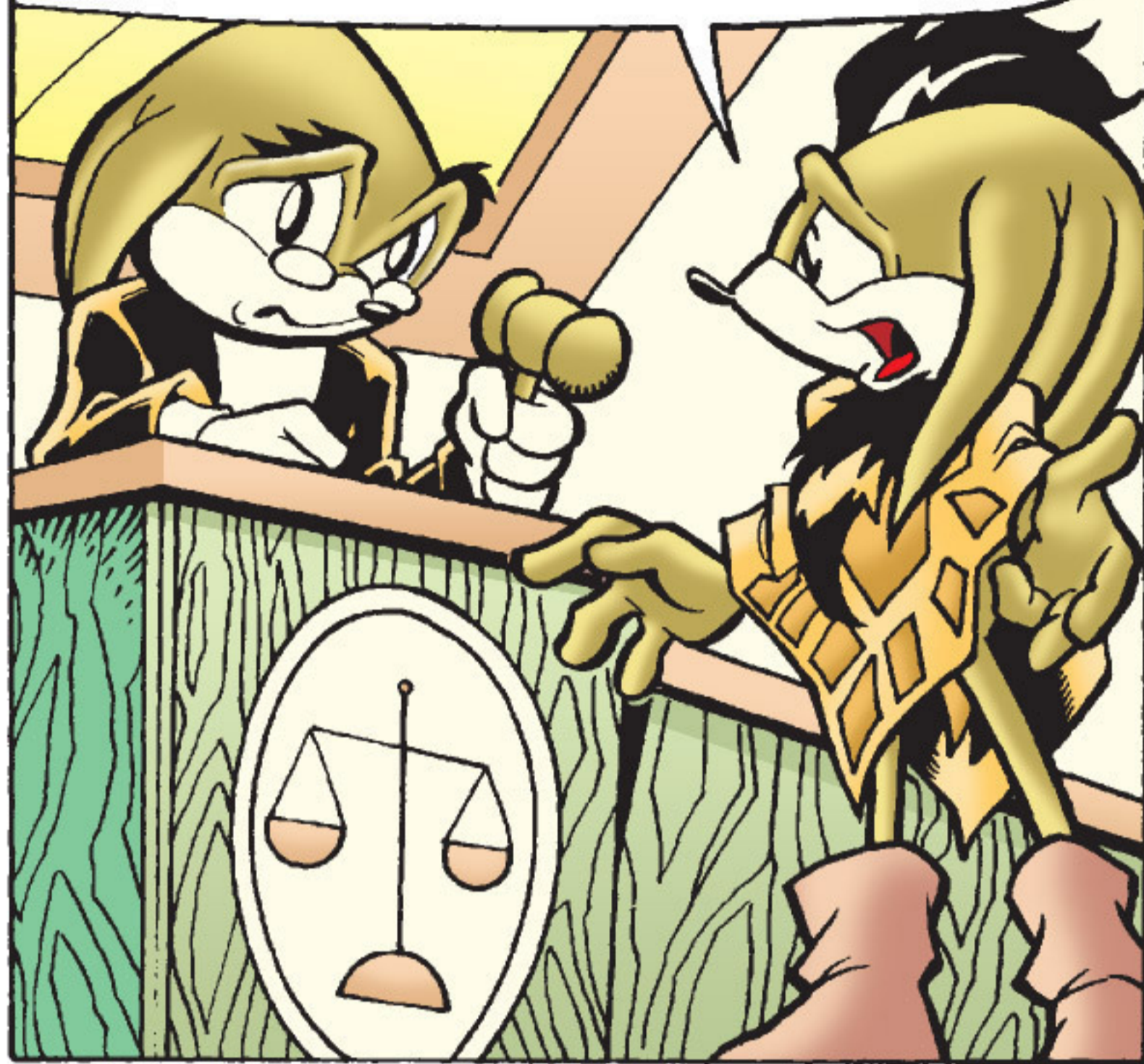
"THERE WAS A DEBATE, WHICH RESULTED IN THE HIGH COUNCIL AGREEING TO KAYLA-LA'S RECOMMENDATION."

THOUGH IT SADDENS ME GREATLY, I CANNOT SUPPORT ARAKKIS IN THIS MATTER.

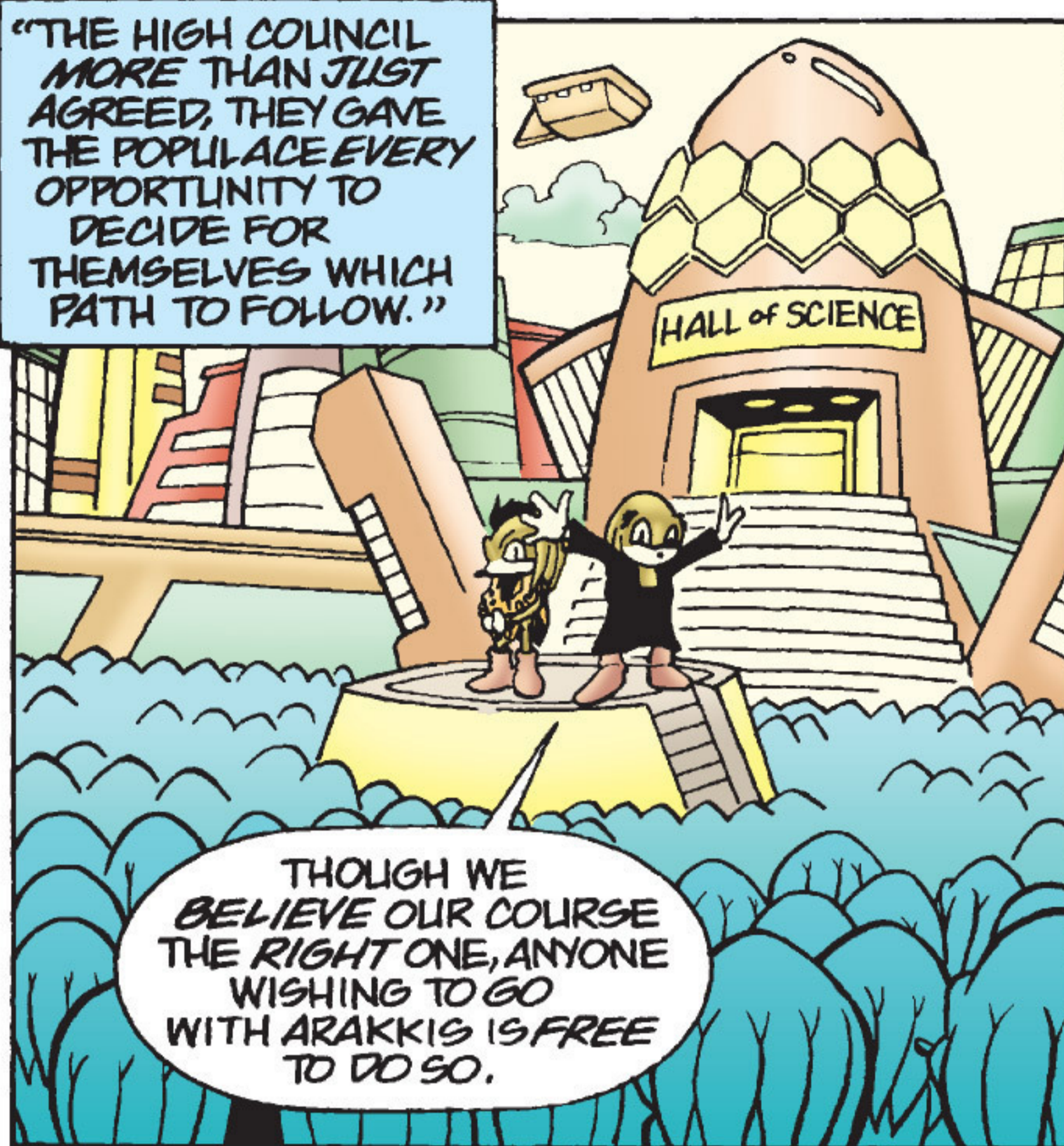
THAT MAKES IT UNANIMOUS THEN!

"SINCE ARAKKIS WOULD NOT ACCEPT 'NO' FOR AN ANSWER, HE MADE A COUNTER-PROPOSAL!"

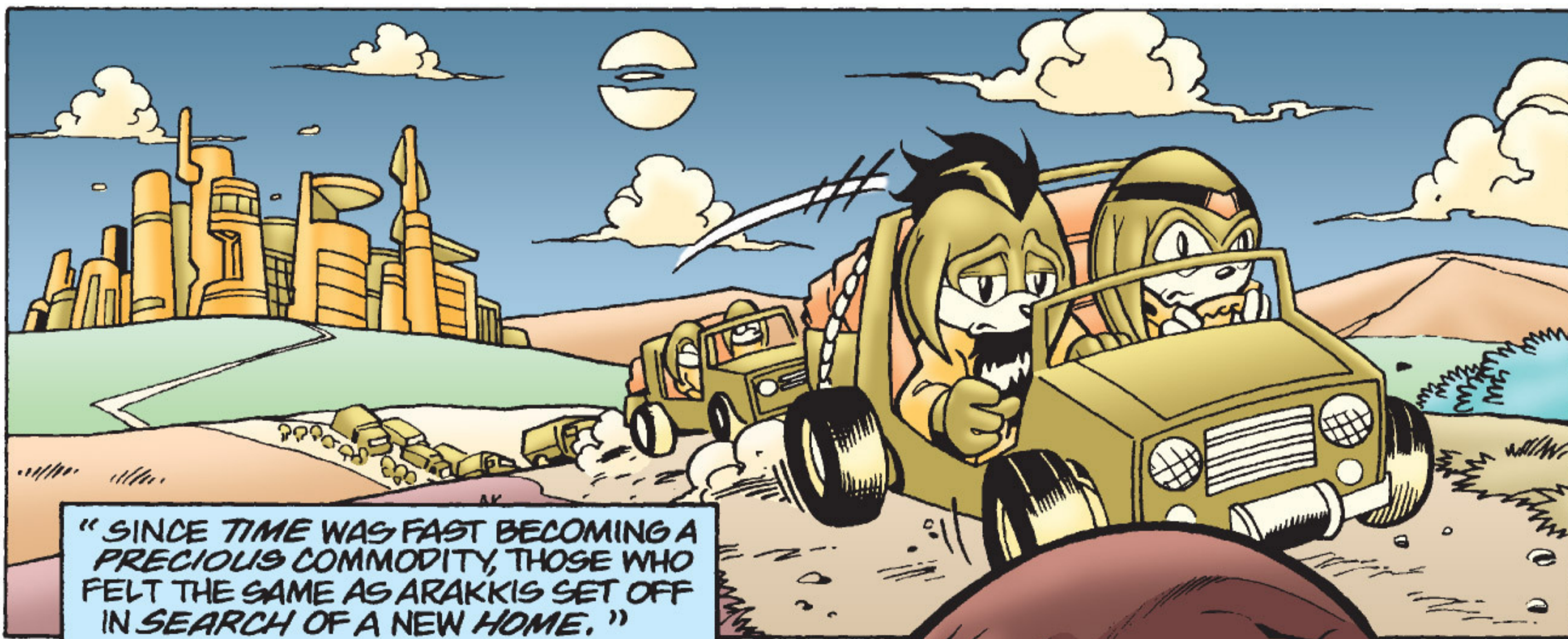
ALLOW THOSE WHO WISH TO FOLLOW ME OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL, AND I WILL MAKE NO EFFORT TO STAND IN YOUR WAY!



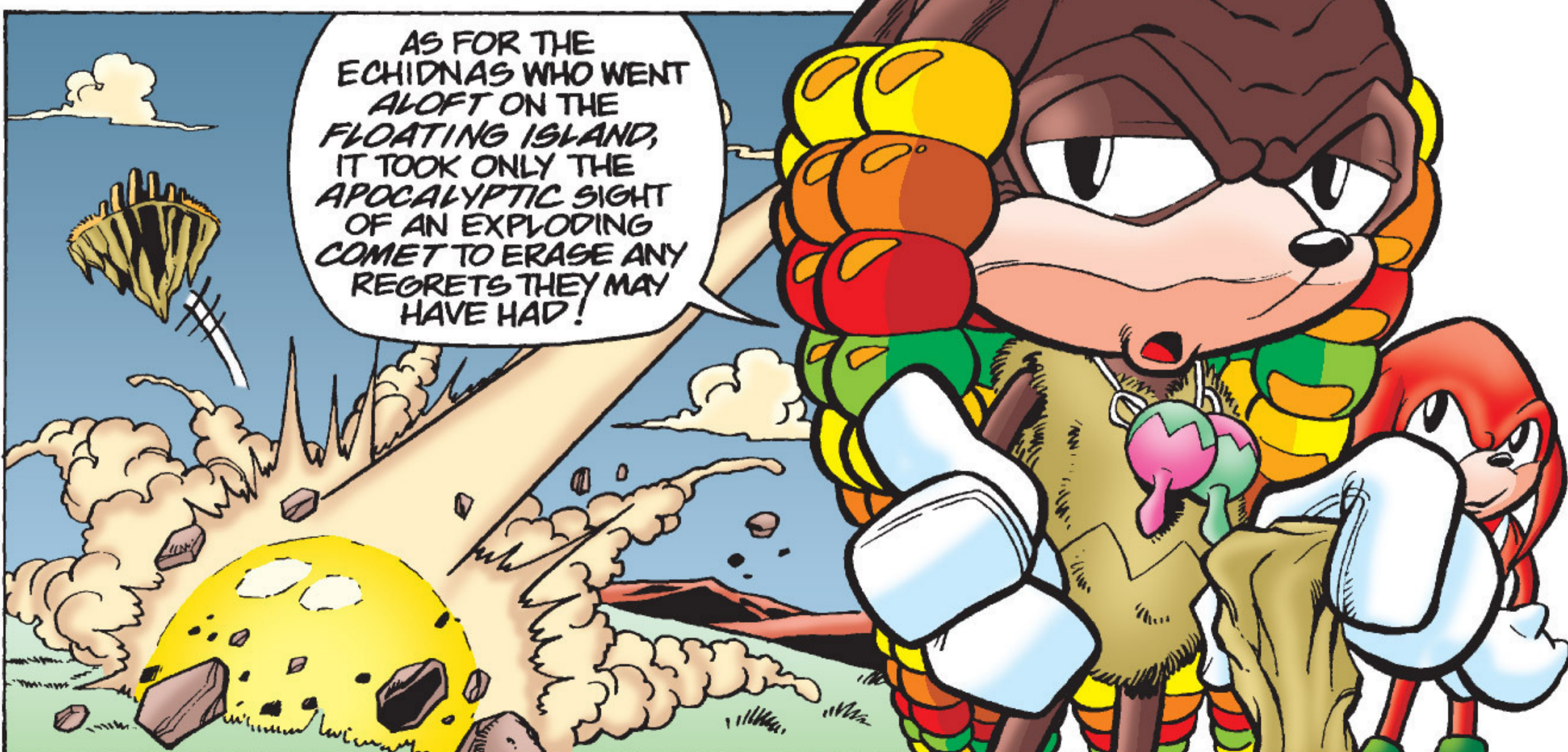
"THE HIGH COUNCIL MORE THAN JUST AGREED, THEY GAVE THE POPULACE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHICH PATH TO FOLLOW."



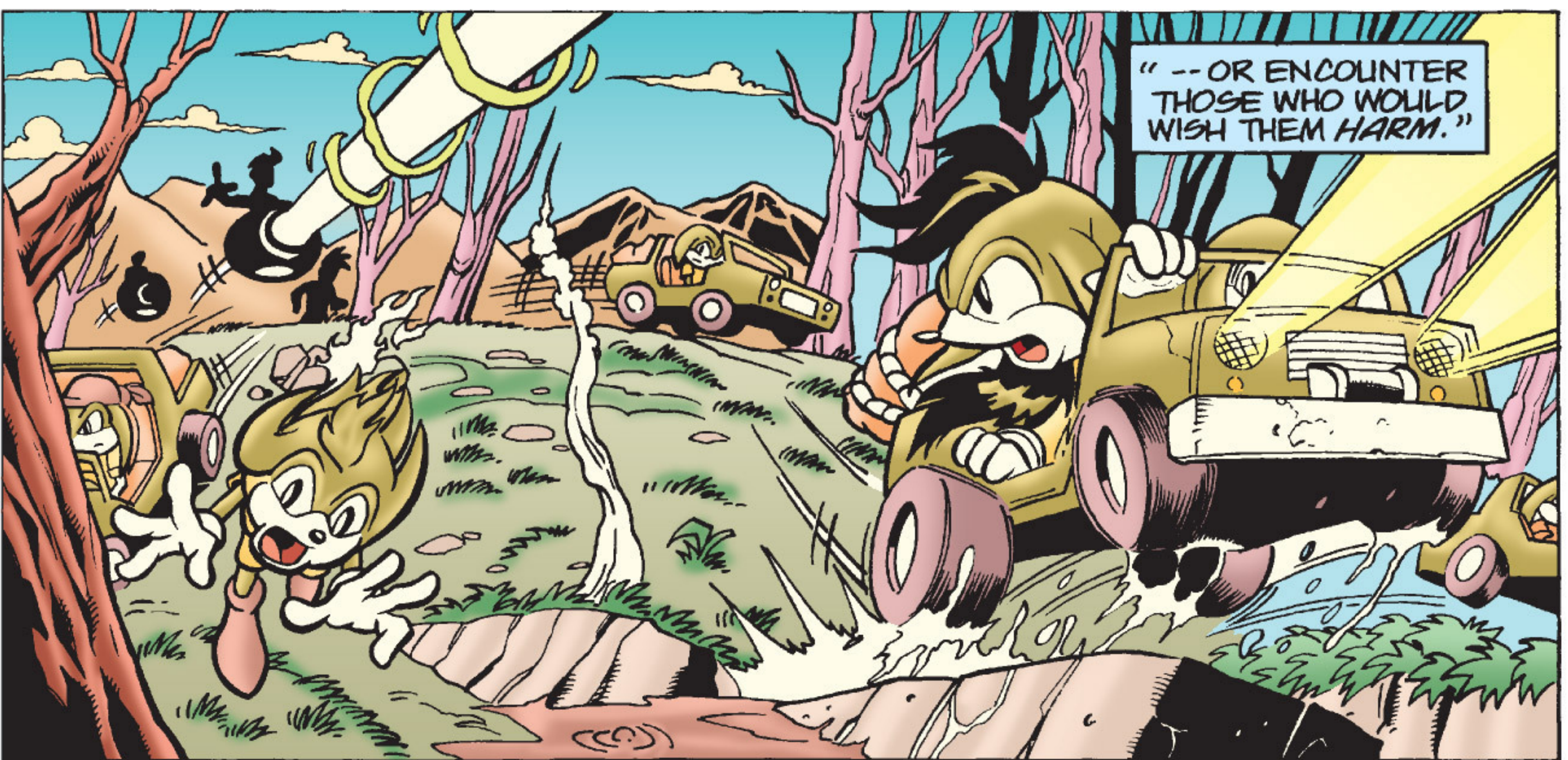
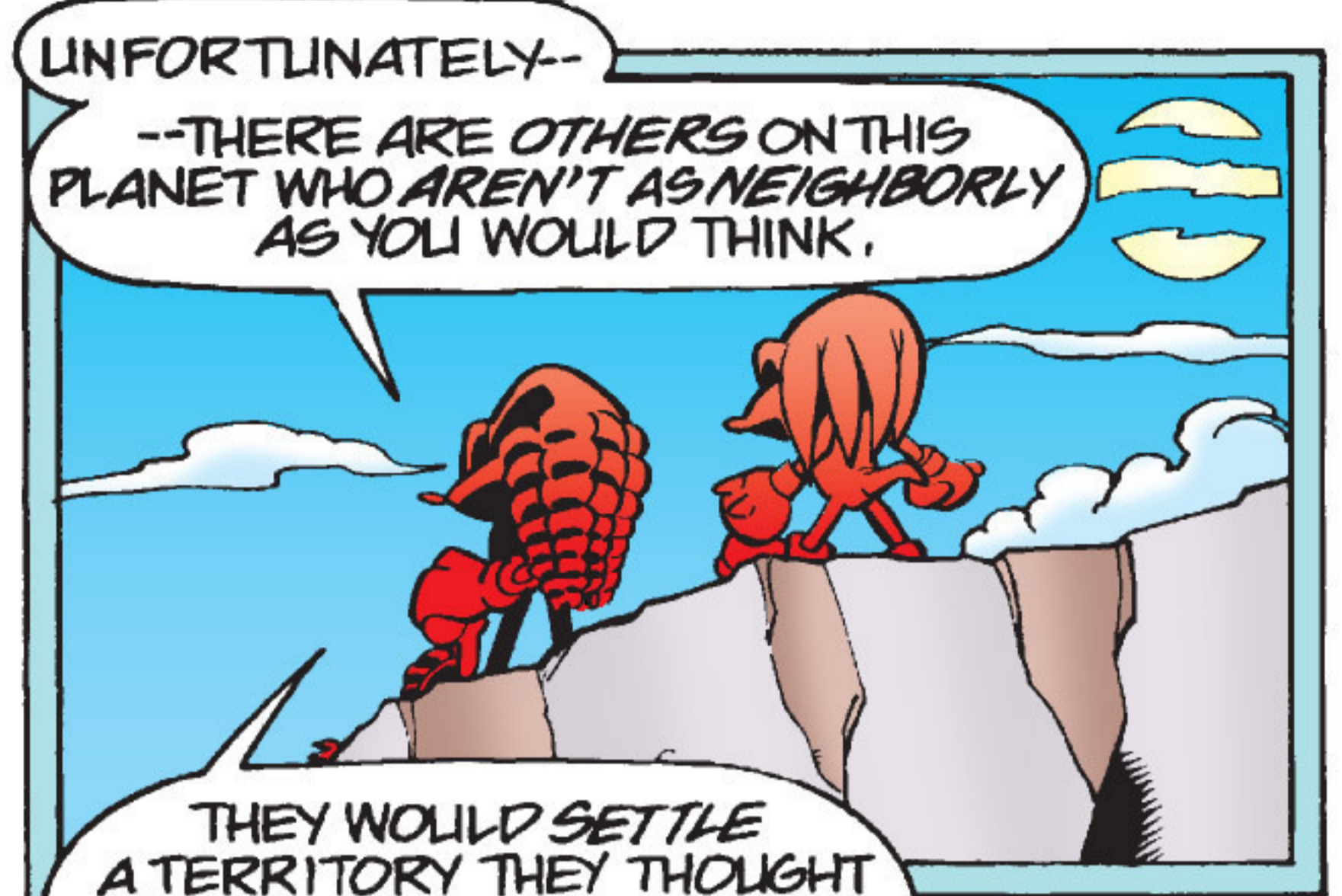
THOUGH WE BELIEVE OUR COURSE THE RIGHT ONE, ANYONE WISHING TO GO WITH ARAKKIS IS FREE TO DO SO.



"SINCE TIME WAS FAST BECOMING A PRECIOUS COMMODITY, THOSE WHO FELT THE SAME AS ARAKKIS SET OFF IN SEARCH OF A NEW HOME."

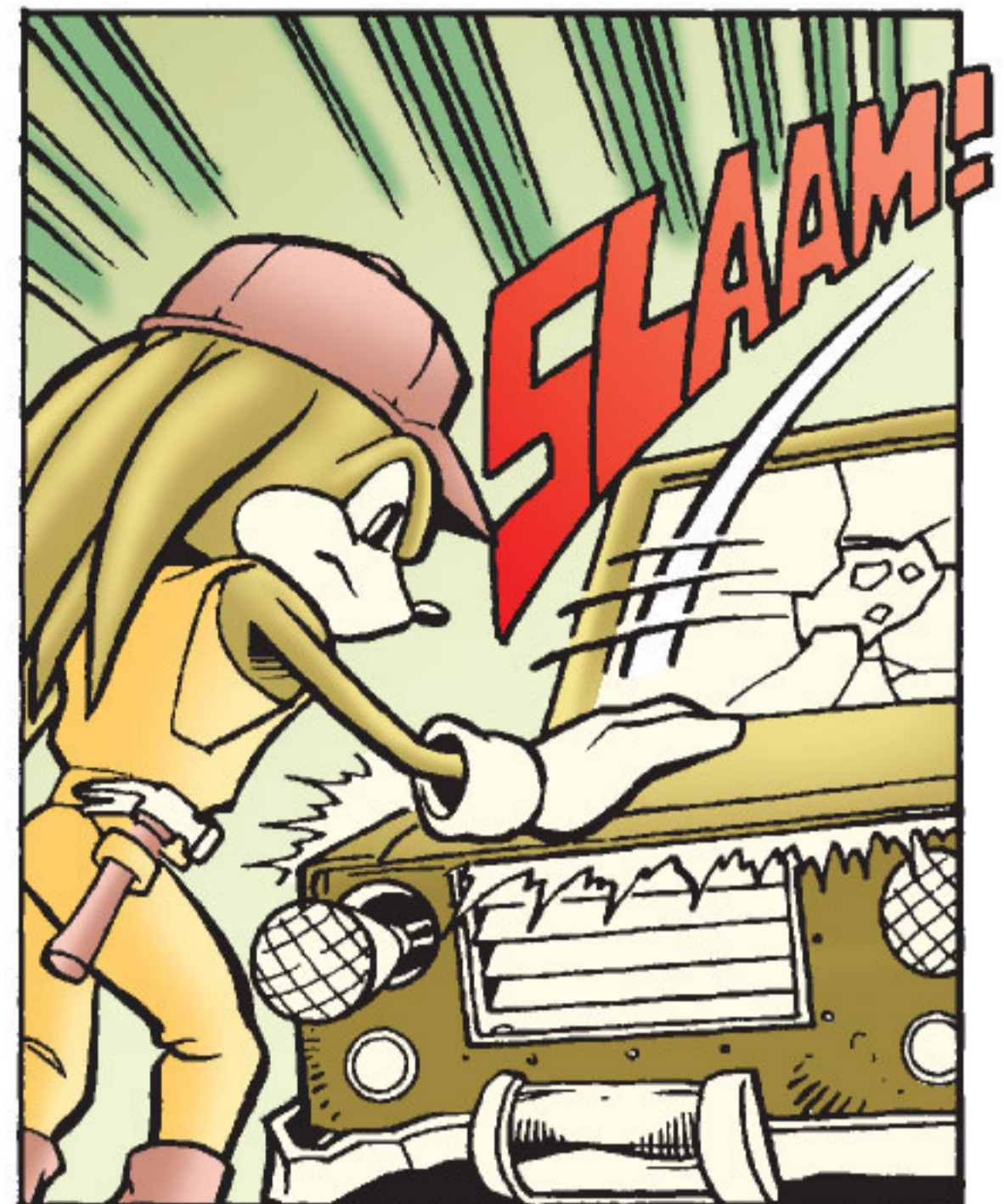
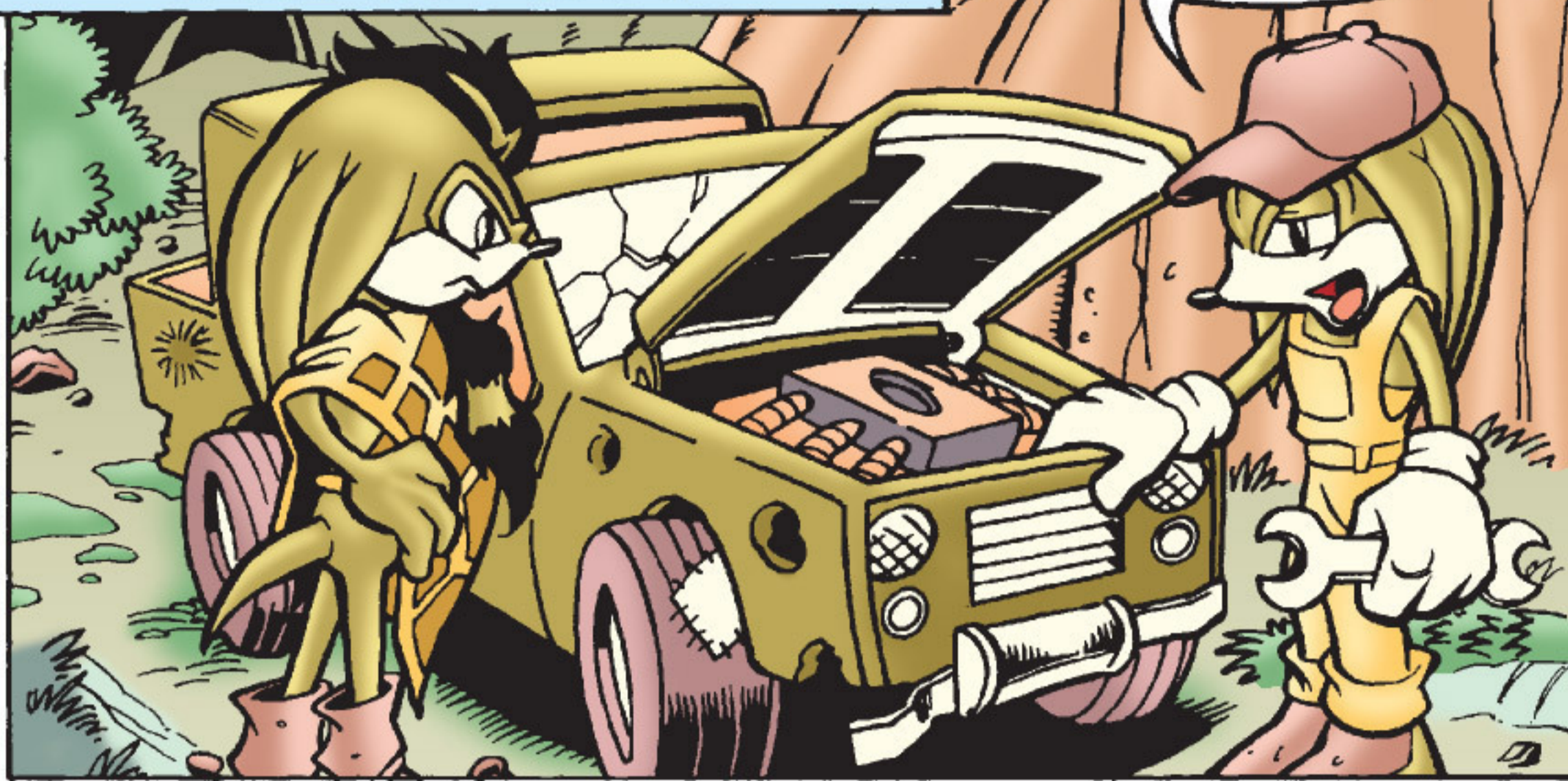


AS FOR THE ECHIDNAS WHO WENT ALOFT ON THE FLOATING ISLAND, IT TOOK ONLY THE APOCALYPTIC SIGHT OF AN EXPLODING COMET TO ERASE ANY REGRETS THEY MAY HAVE HAD!

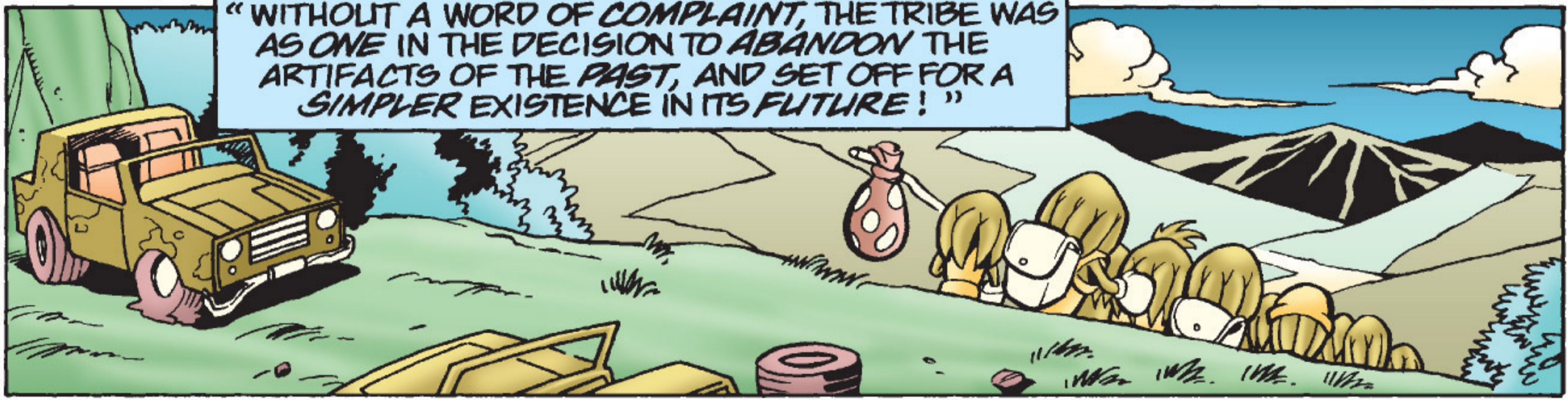


"IT WASN'T MUCH LONGER BEFORE ONE FACT BECAME APPARENT: THEIR TECHNOLOGY COULD ONLY CARRY THEM SO FAR."

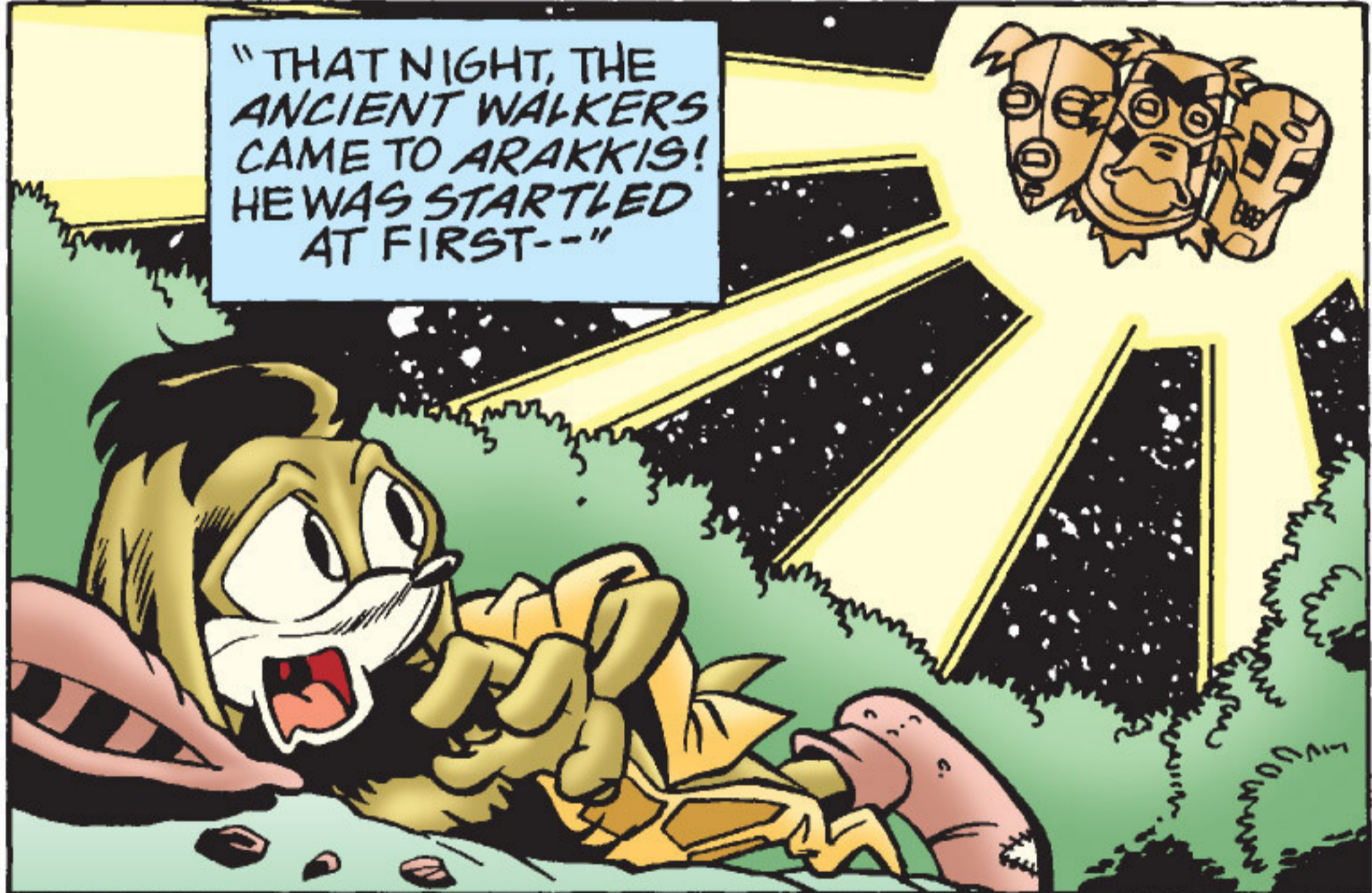
WITHOUT SPARE PARTS, THIS BABY'S HAD IT!



"WITHOUT A WORD OF COMPLAINT, THE TRIBE WAS AS ONE IN THE DECISION TO ABANDON THE ARTIFACTS OF THE PAST, AND SET OFF FOR A SIMPLER EXISTENCE IN ITS FUTURE!"



"THAT NIGHT, THE ANCIENT WALKERS CAME TO ARAKKIS! HE WAS STARTLED AT FIRST--"



--BUT WAS SOON HUMBLLED BY THE PROMISE OF THESE MYSTICAL BEINGS IN HELPING HIM LOOK AFTER THE TRIBE!

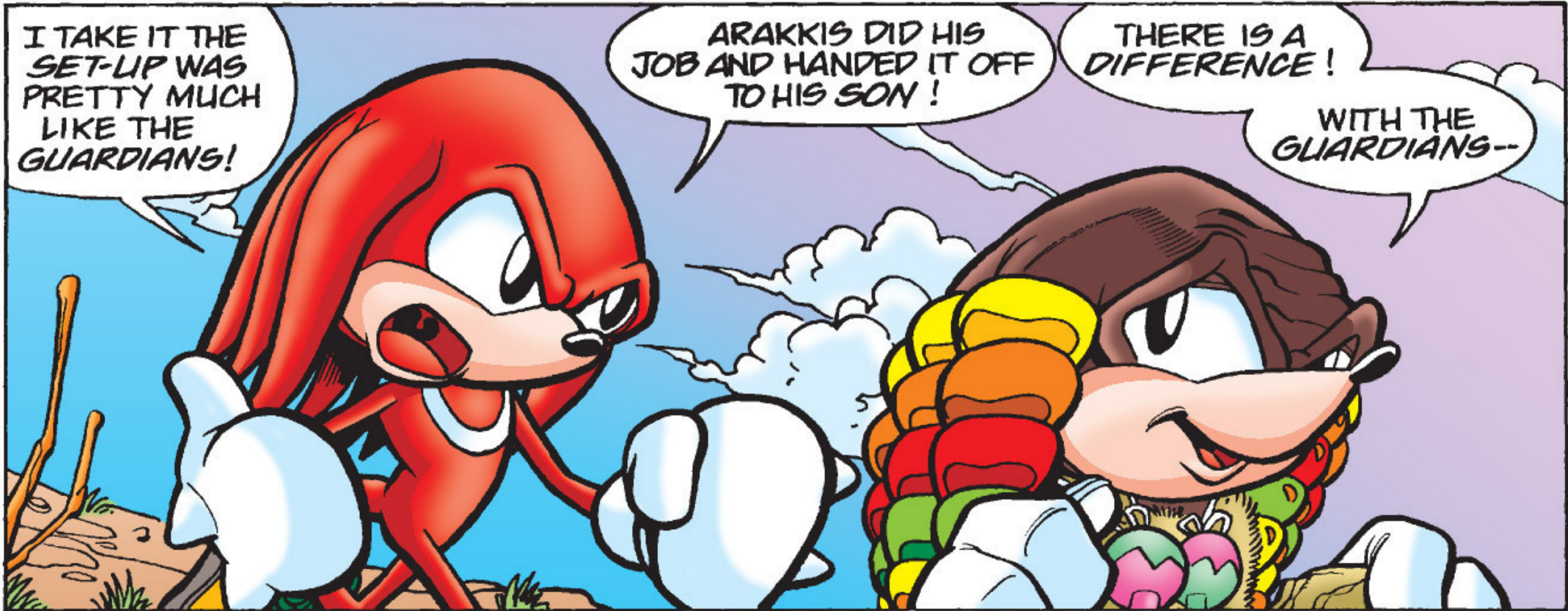


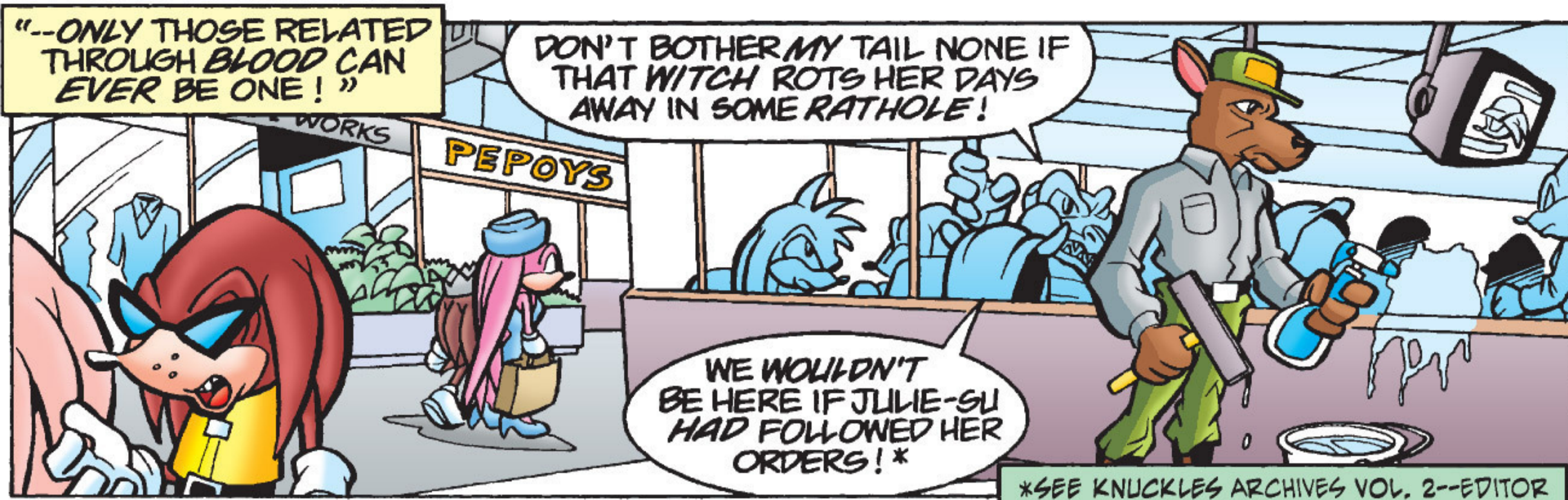
I TAKE IT THE SET-UP WAS PRETTY MUCH LIKE THE GUARDIANS!

ARAKKIS DID HIS JOB AND HANDED IT OFF TO HIS SON!

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE!

WITH THE GUARDIANS--



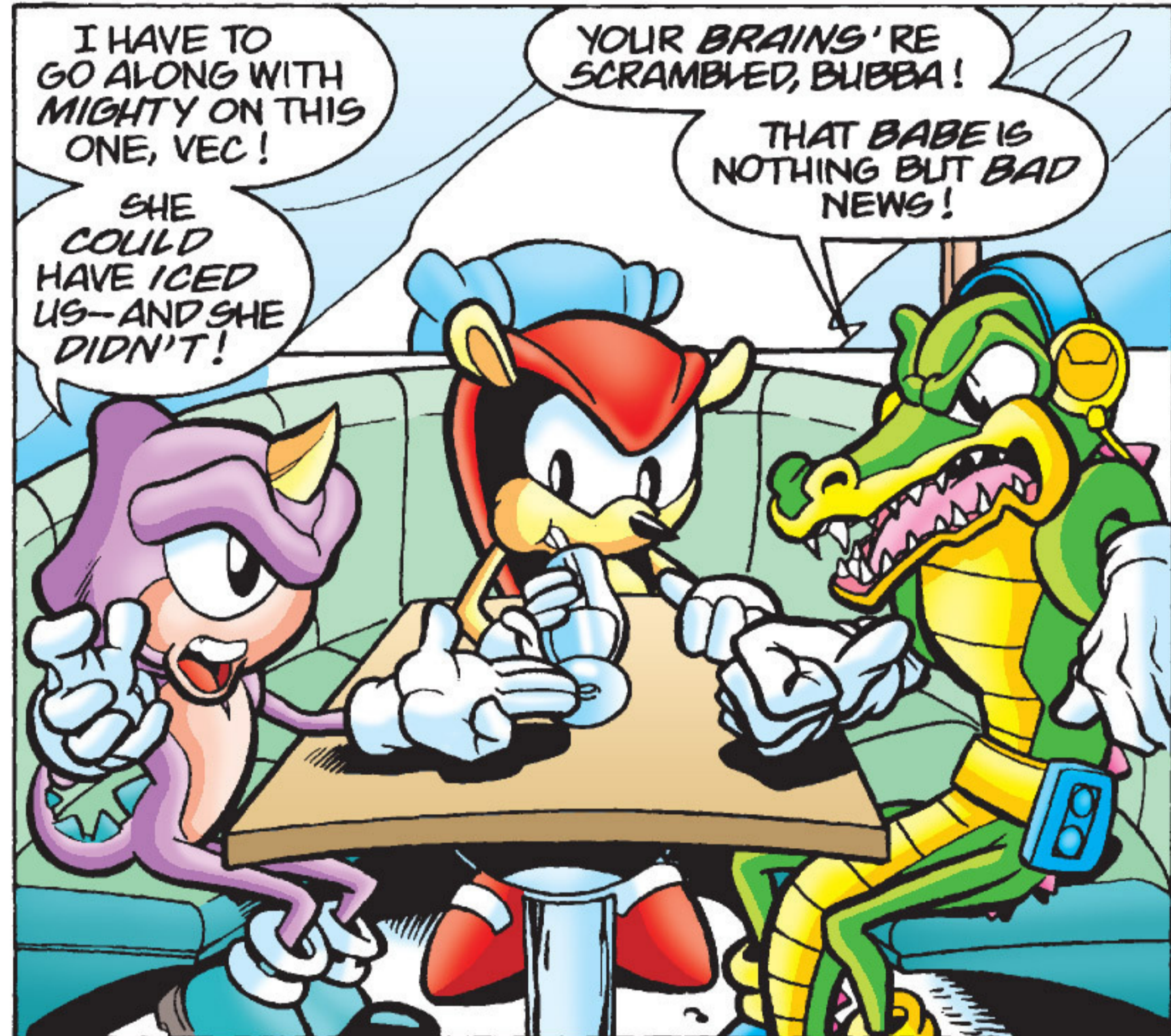


"--ONLY THOSE RELATED THROUGH BLOOD CAN EVER BE ONE!"

DON'T BOTHER MY TAIL NONE IF THAT WITCH ROTTS HER DAYS AWAY IN SOME RATHOLE!

WE WOULDN'T BE HERE IF JULIE-SU HAD FOLLOWED HER ORDERS! *

*SEE KNUCKLES ARCHIVES VOL. 2--EDITOR

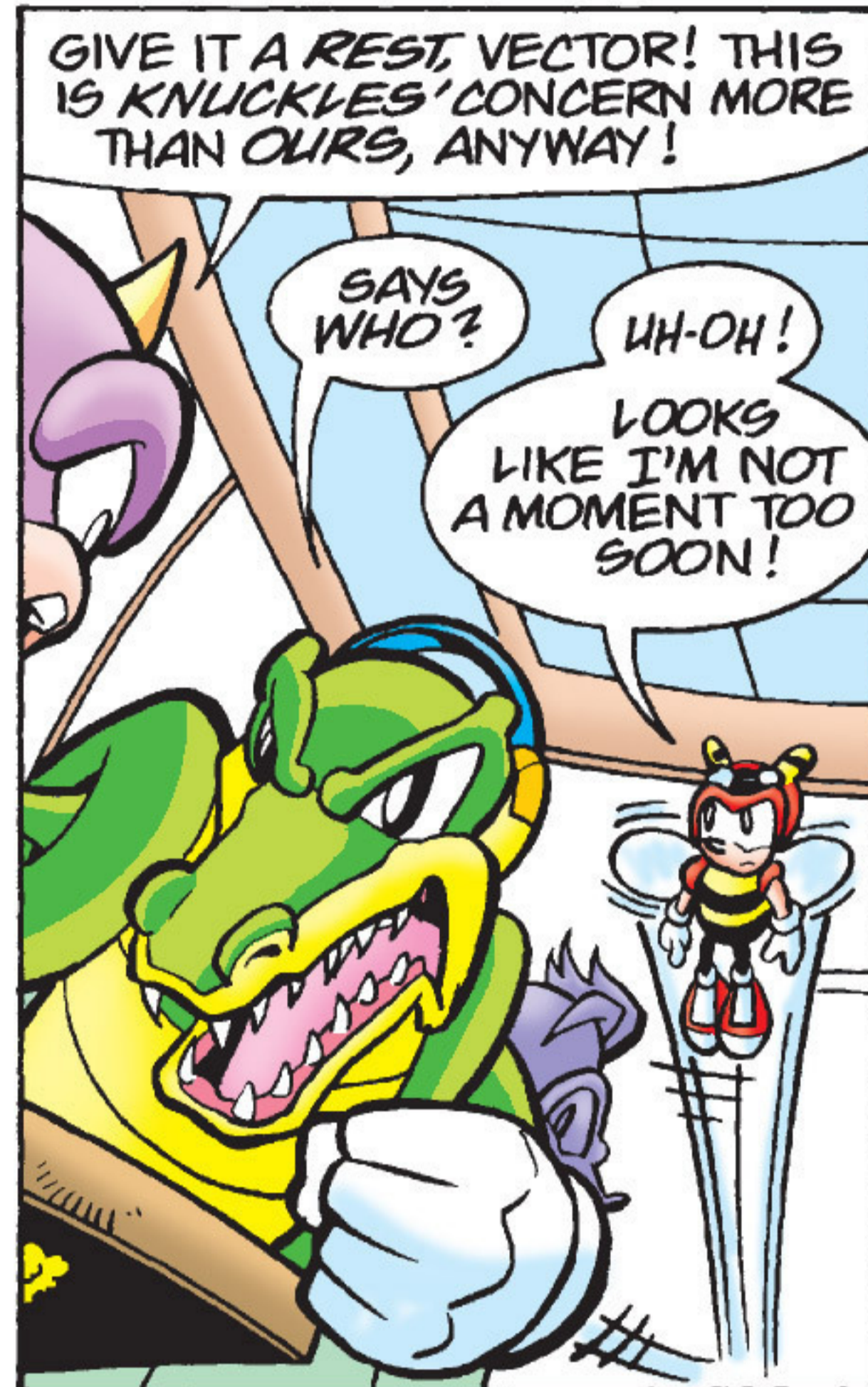


I HAVE TO GO ALONG WITH MIGHTY ON THIS ONE, VEC!

SHE COULD HAVE ICED US--AND SHE DIDN'T!

YOUR BRAINS'RE SCRAMBLED, BUBBA!

THAT BABE IS NOTHING BUT BAD NEWS!

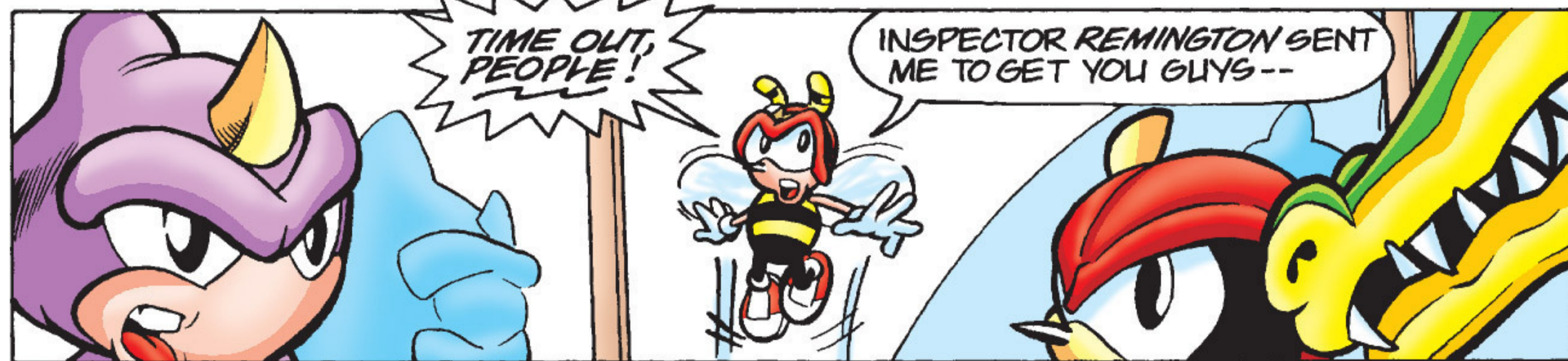


GIVE IT A REST, VECTOR! THIS IS KNUCKLES' CONCERN MORE THAN OURS, ANYWAY!

SAYS WHO?

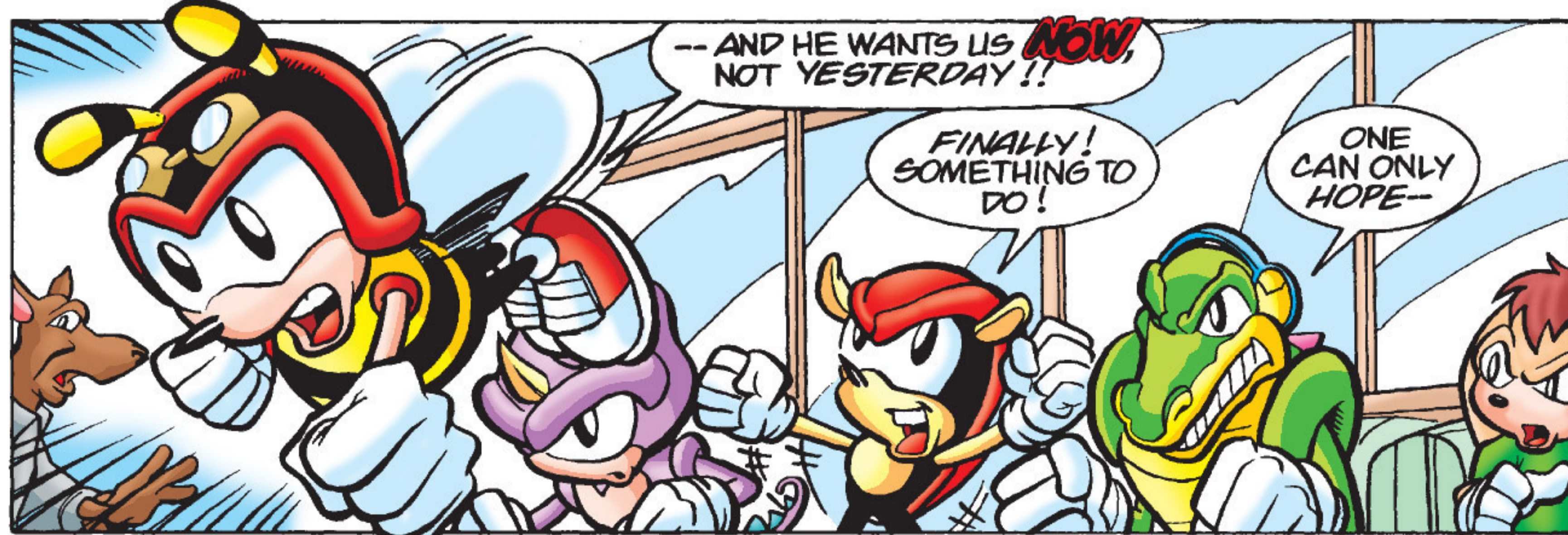
UH-OH!

LOOKS LIKE I'M NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON!



TIME OUT, PEOPLE!

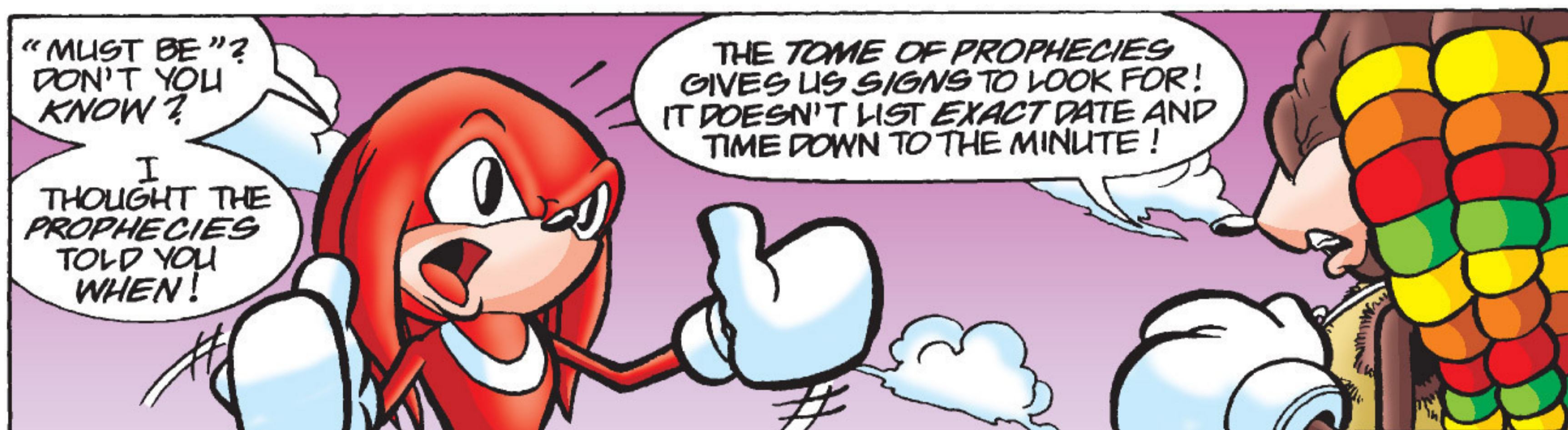
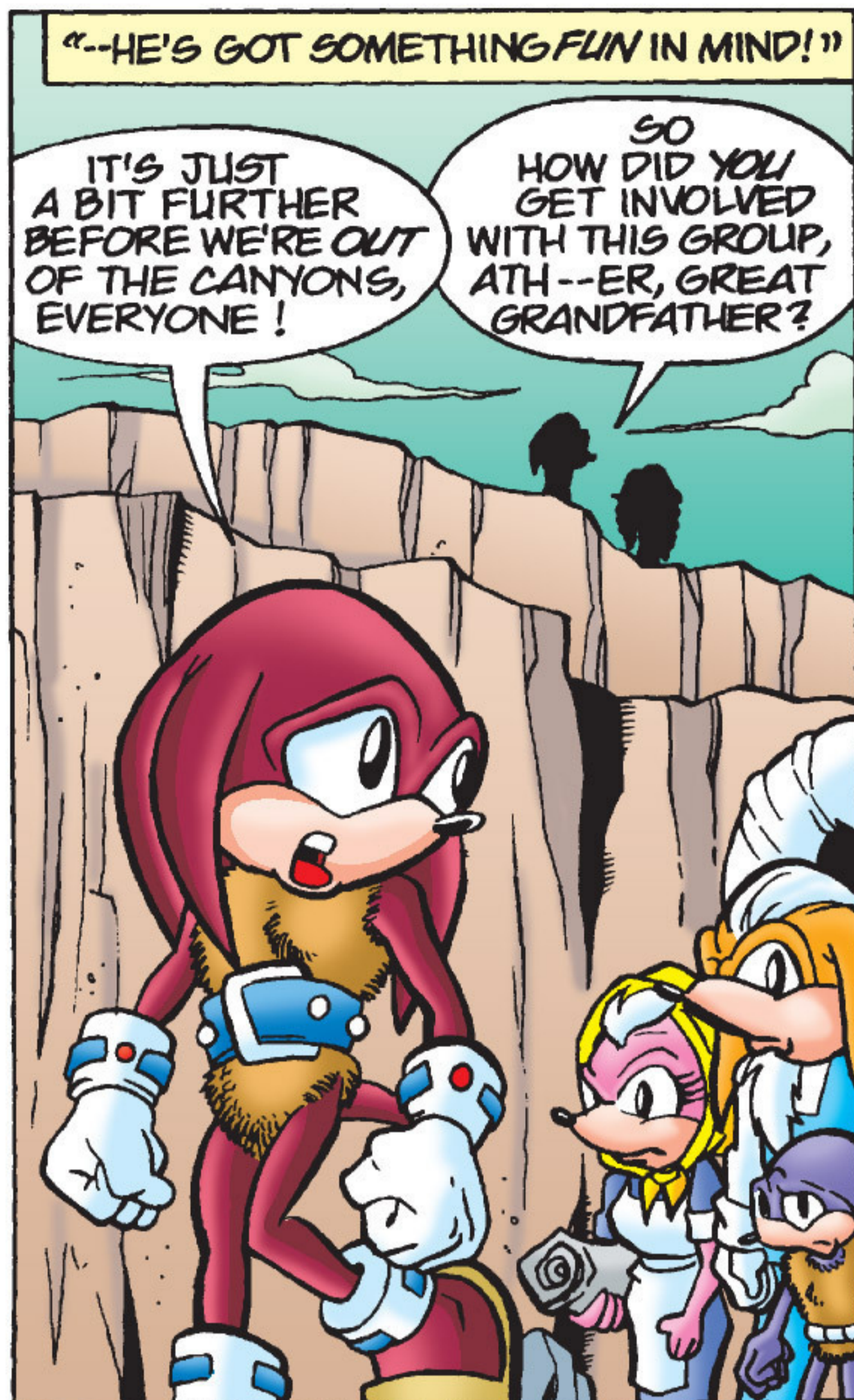
INSPECTOR REMINGTON SENT ME TO GET YOU GUYS--

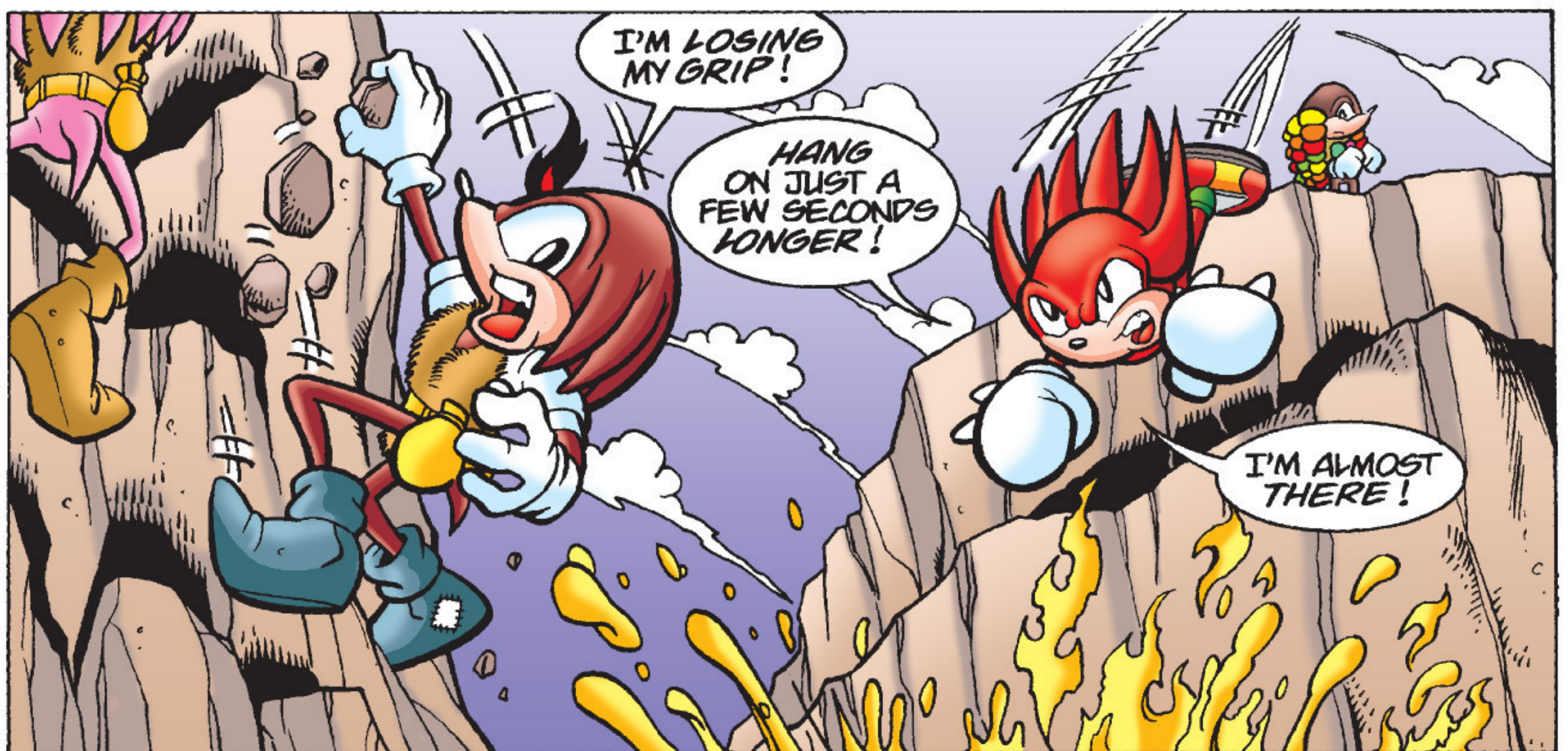
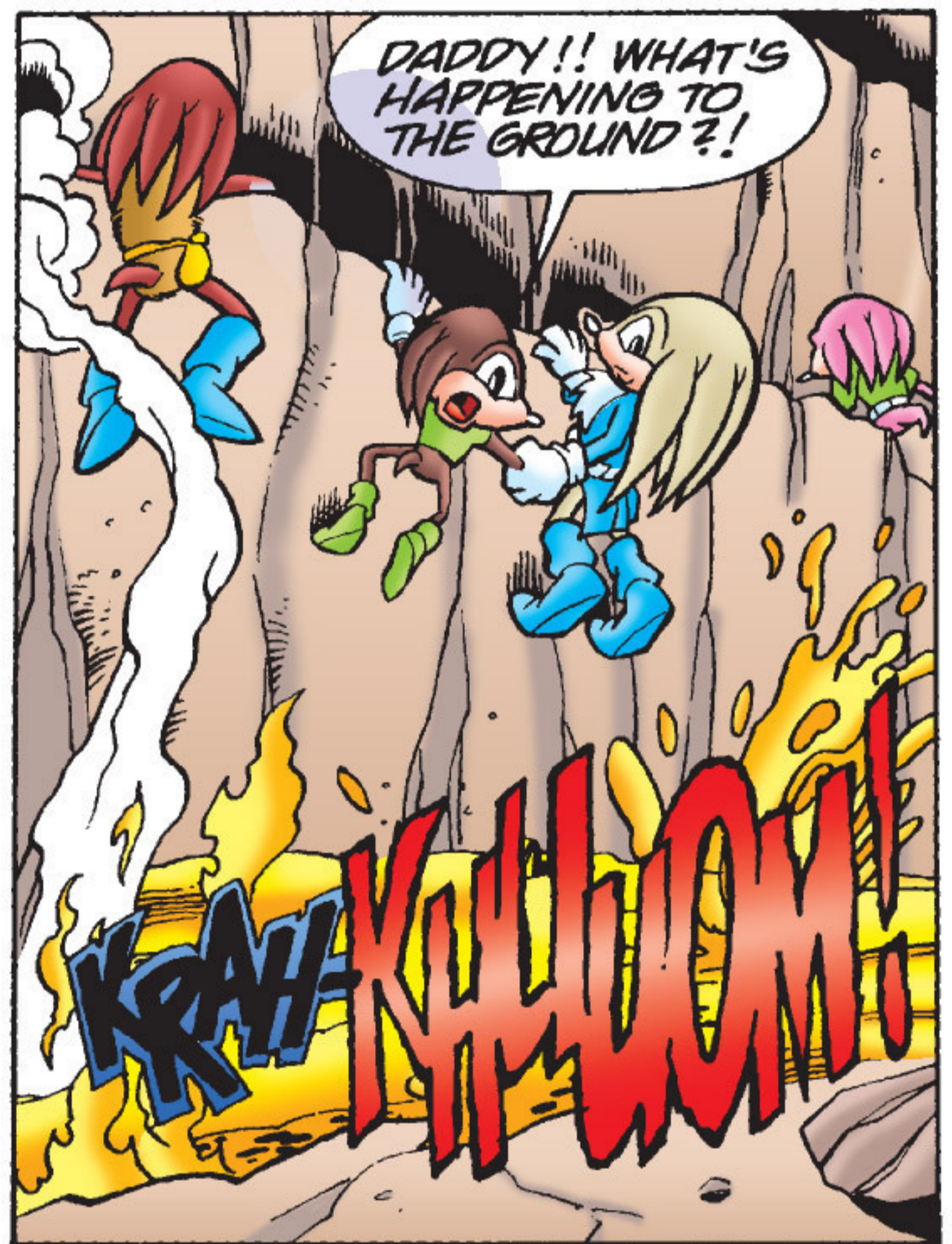
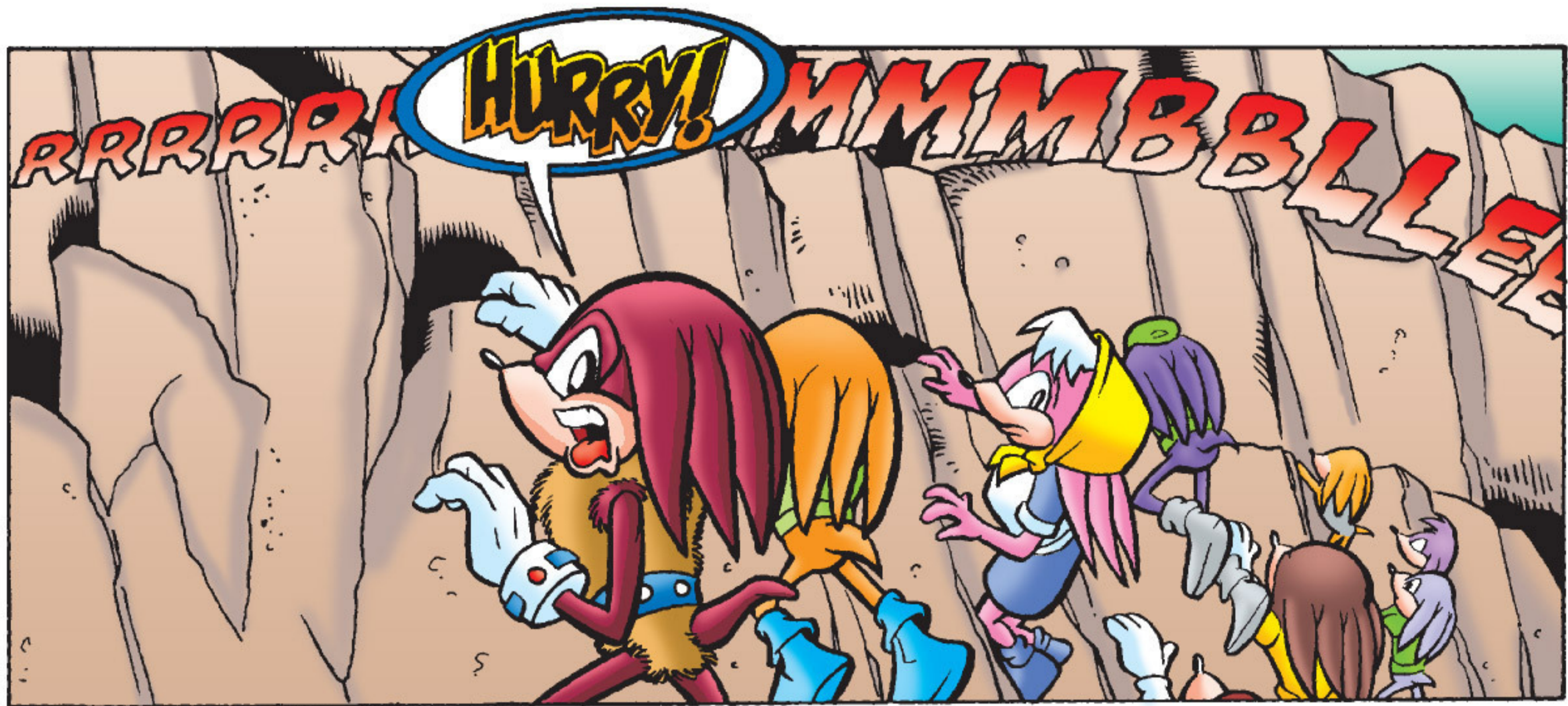


-- AND HE WANTS US NOW, NOT YESTERDAY!!

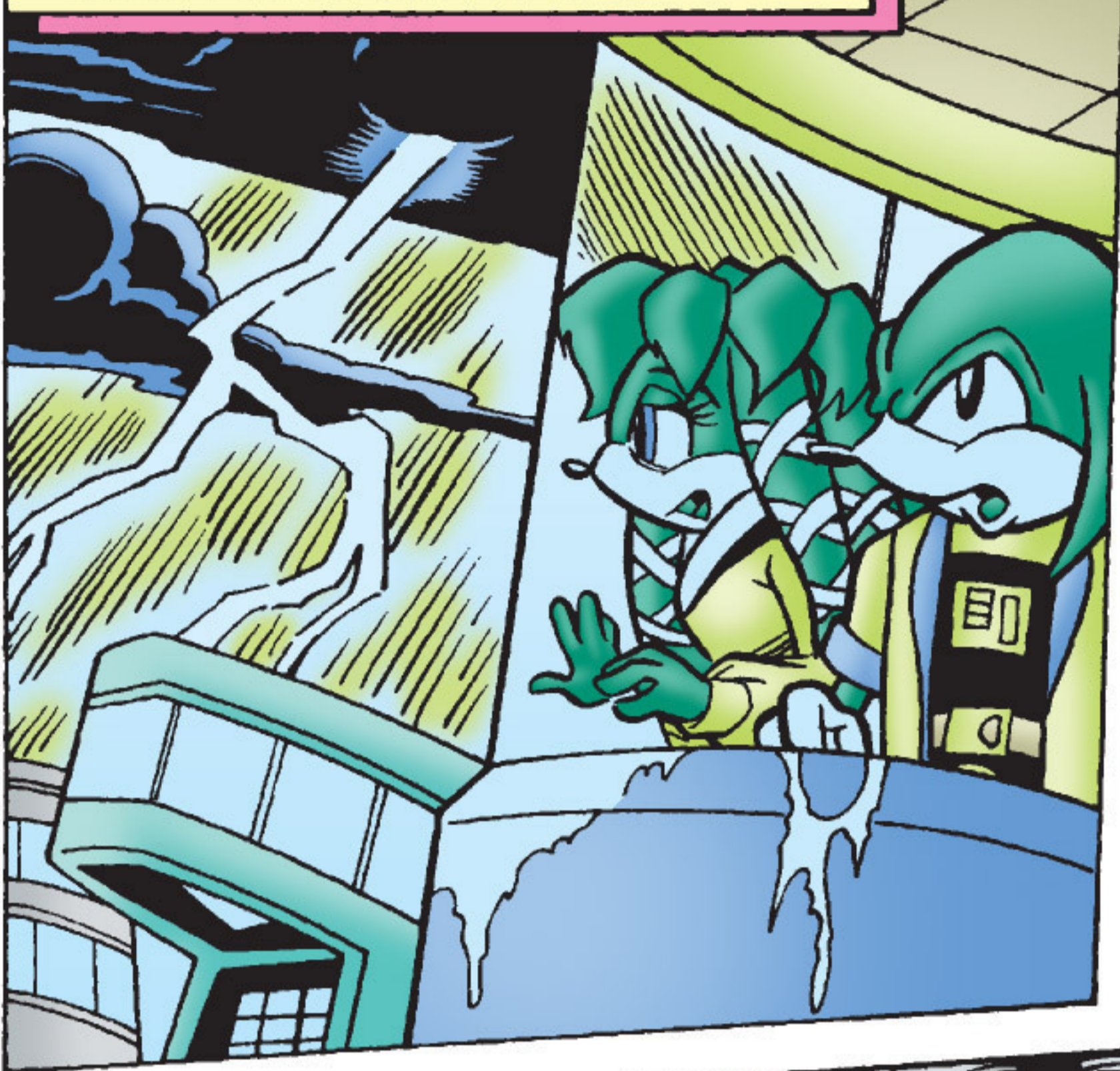
FINALLY! SOMETHING TO DO!

ONE CAN ONLY HOPE--

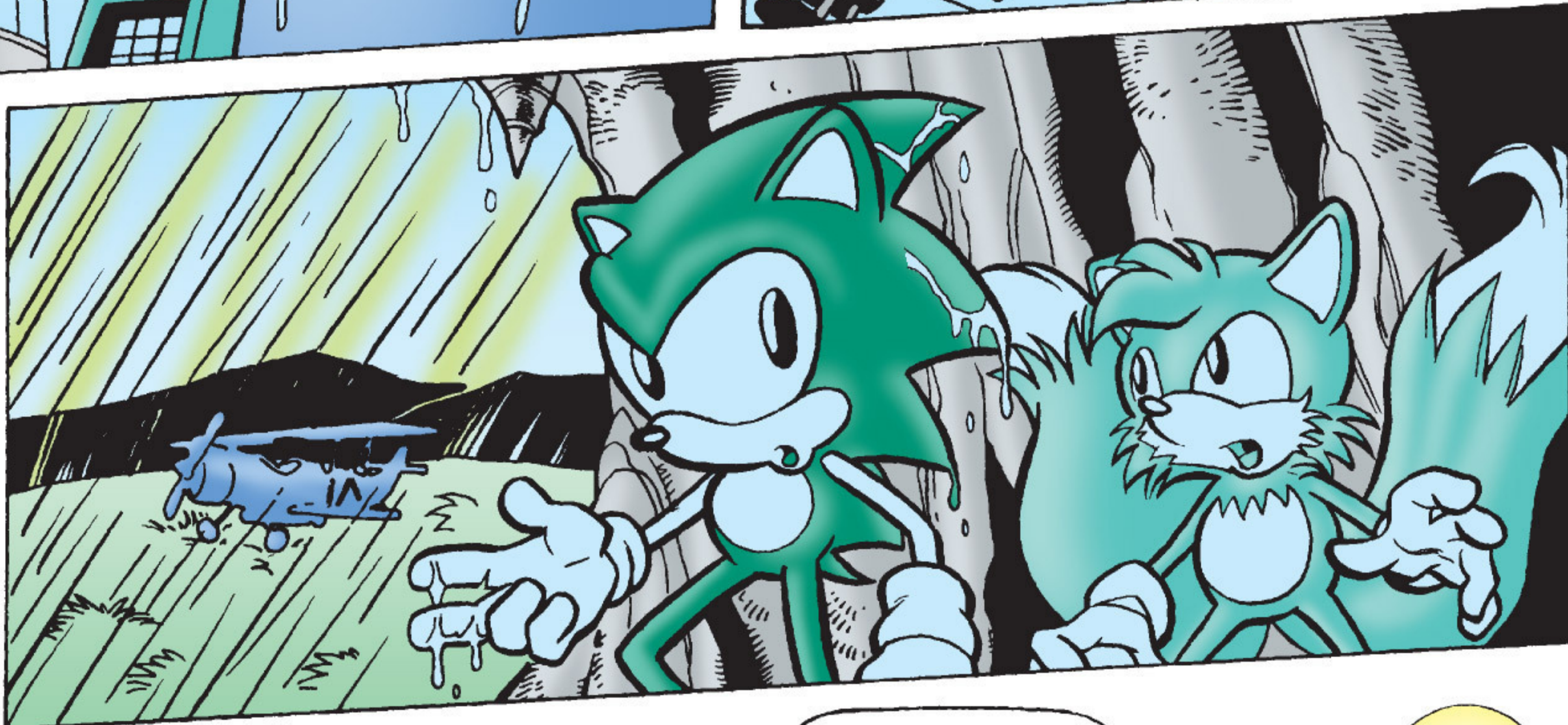
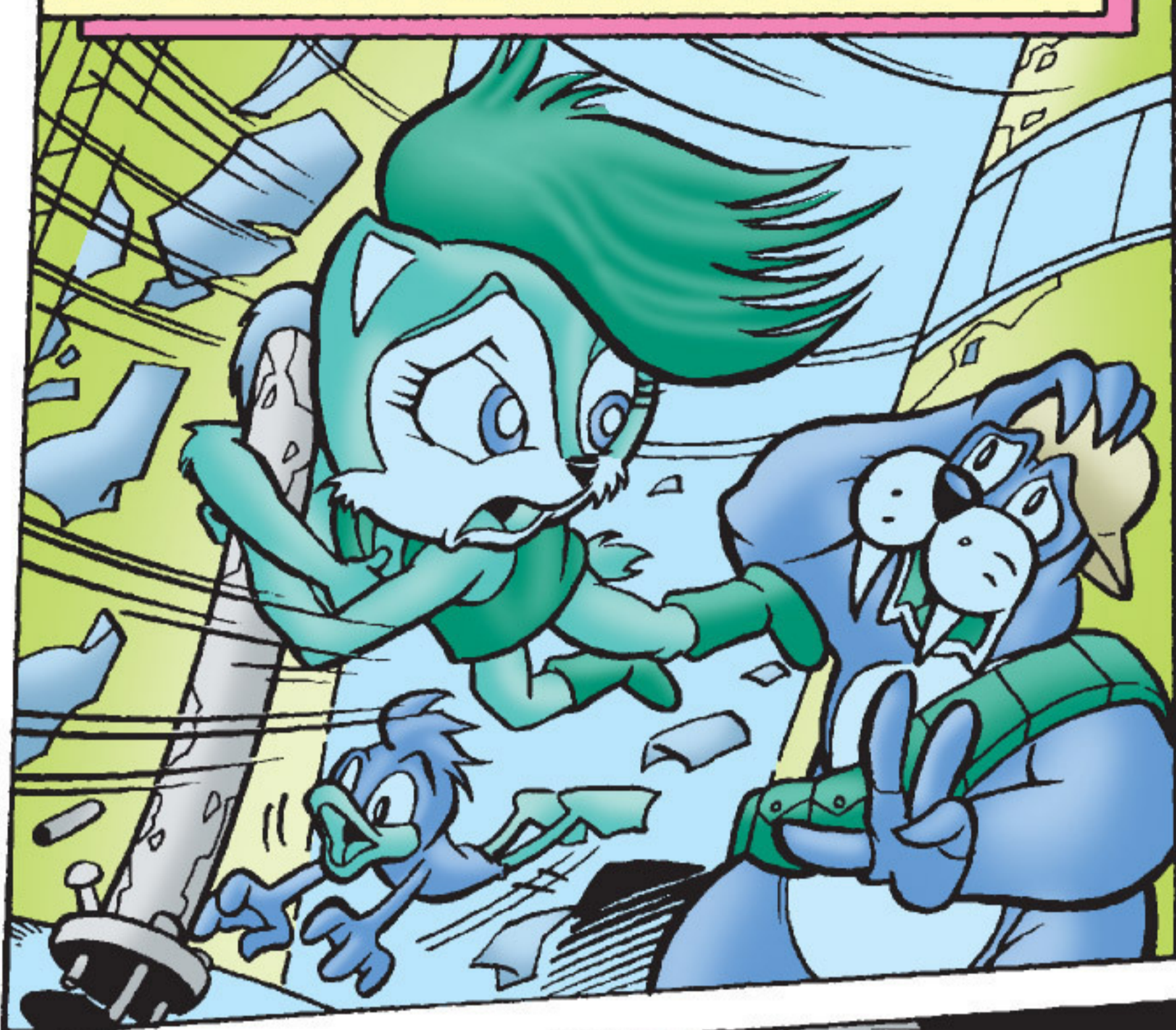




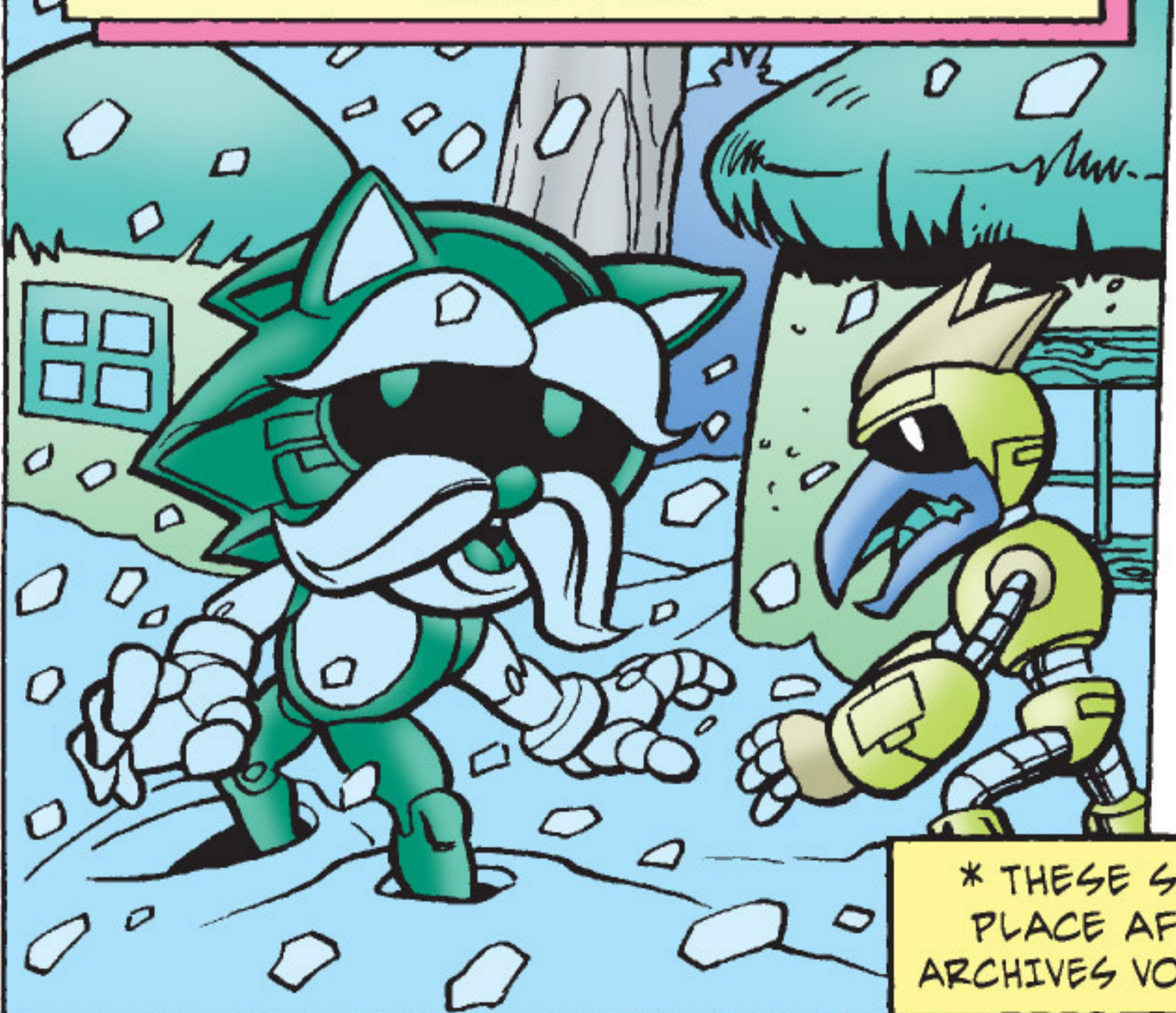
"WE WERE GIVEN THREE TOMES TO LEARN FROM AND GUIDE US, KNUCKLES! I HAVE STUDIED THEM ALL OF MY LIFE!"



"THE DAY OF FURY IS NATURE'S WAY OF ADJUSTING TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES IT UNDERGOES OVER A CERTAIN DURATION."



"THE LAST ONE WAS CHRONICLED IN THE TOME OF RECOLLECTIONS TO HAVE OCCURRED SOME TWELVE HUNDRED YEARS AGO--"



--UNDER SIMILAR CONDITIONS!

THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW!

HOW DID ANYONE SURVIVE BACK THEN?

* THESE SCENES TAKE PLACE AFTER SONIC ARCHIVES VOL. 16 --EDITOR



MOST DIDN'T!

OH, GREAT!!!

SEVERAL HUNDRED ECHIDNAS ABOUT TO BE BURNED TO A CRISP--

--AND YOU SAY IT'S A LOST CAUSE!

NO WAY, AT HAIR!!! WE GOTTA DO SOMETHING!

BAD SCENE, MAN! BAAAD SCENE!

TO BE CONTINUED...